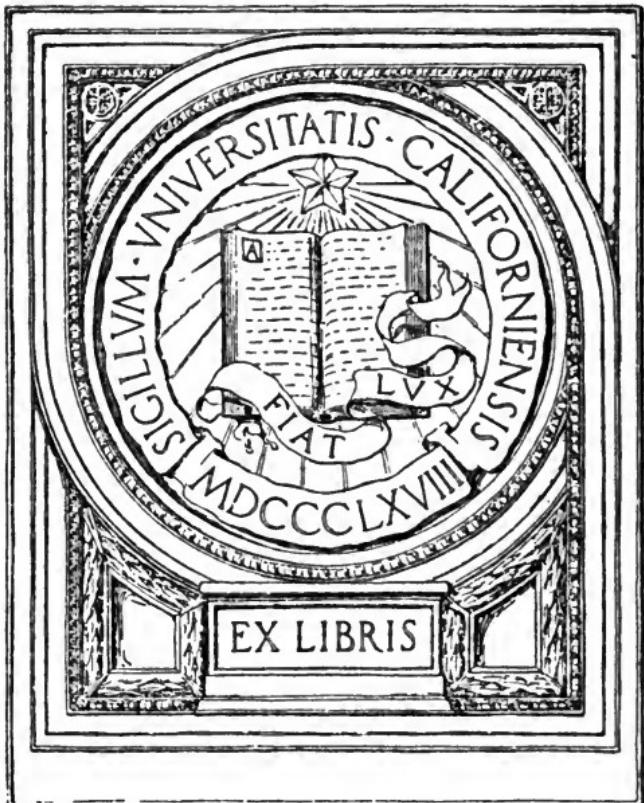




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EARLIER AND LATER LEAVES:

or,

AN AUTUMN GATHERING.



*Back through the Summers stole
Young Memory with Soul,
And 'midst the blighted ears,
That fed the famished years,
Whose names were on her scroll,
The twain sat down in tears.*

*A Spirit winged with flame,
Betwixt them went and came,
And charged the passing hours
With strange transforming powers,
Till nothing seemed the same—
The tears were changed to flowers.*

*There Soul knelt down and prayed ;
Then with the flowers played ;
The Spirit smiled while she
Exclaimed, half musingly,
The light that's caught from shade
Alone is Poesy.*

Page 509.

—

BY FRANCIS DAVIS,

"The Belfast-man."

Con O'Neill



EARLIER AND LATER LEAVES:

OR,

AN AUTUMN GATHERING.

BY

FRANCIS DAVIS,
"The Belfast-man."

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

BY THE

REV. COLUMBAN O'GRADY, C.P.



B E I F A S T : W . H . G I L L
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A T H O M E A N D A B R O A D ,

B Y T H E I R

F E L L O W C O U N T R Y M A N ,

F R A N C I S D A V I S .

HOLYWOOD,
BELFAST, IRELAND,

February, 1878.

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INTRODUCTION.

TN an age so sordid and sensual as ours, the Poet has a great intellectual mission to fulfil—namely, to restore its titles to the human mind: to purify and elevate the emotions of the heart, to awaken and educate the soul's fathomless sympathies with natural and moral beauty. And who that observes, with an intelligent eye, the present state of society, will deny that there is vital need for the exercise of such a function? We are living at a time when “all flesh” seems to have “corrupted its way,” as in the days before the Flood; when our political and social action is unnatural because un-National; when the public sentiment of the nation, in consequence of its long exposure to the action of an insidious Materialism, at war with all moral and mental power, is pervaded by vicious delusions, and depraving influences, literary and social. The most fatal of these is a blind worship of the coarse abomination known by the specious name of “Utility,” or “Progress,” which is founded on a Godless and soulless economy, with the Ledger for its Bible: and Mammon, Moloch, and Belial—a trinity of devils—for its god! A doctrine of Sensuality and Fraud, reduced to a system, organised by vulpine selfism, masked in cant, and codified by lust and greed; but which, in the estimation of those amongst us who are content to be ruled by “modern ideas,” comprises the law and the prophets.

Is it not a sad thing that we, although the victims of such a system, find ourselves promoting, through all the channels of influence at our command, this gospel of Materialism, which renders man incapable of appreciating the dignity and destiny of his being; obliges him to ignore the duties, the sacrifices, and the virtues that ennoble and sanctify a true human life, and attract into his soul the grace and love of the Most High, in order to wallow in the veiled sensualism which he calls Enjoyment? In the eyes of the worshippers of this unclean idol, human life is a mere scramble of animal instincts and

grovelling aims, originating and ending in the dust. They treat even the man of most accomplished intellect and of sublimest genius—a Sheridan, a Goldsmith, or a Burke—as nothing more than an intelligent drudge of the senses, obliging him to degrade his faculties to the service of his appetites ; or, at best, “ though born for the universe,” to

“Narrow his mind,
And to *Mammon* give up what was meant for mankind.”

The spirit of this age—which flatters itself that because it is the Nineteenth Century, it contains the collective wisdom of all previous ages, and is therefore entitled to indulge in and enforce its shallow conceits regarding utility and “progress”—is a base and grovelling spirit, which instils the pride and licence that fascinate and flatter flesh and blood, and effaces from the soul that love of the beautiful and that tender sensibility which are the essence of poetry and pathos.

This debasing spirit is as fatal to lofty principle as to poetic sentiment. Its tendency is to make man the slave of his meanest passions, and to depress all thought and action to the level of the most paltry aims. Its great object seems to be to reduce man to the condition of a “patent digester,” and its leading motto that of Iago—“Put money in thy purse.” It has been well observed that “we are utterly losing our faith in spiritual things, and are beginning to think that matter and external form, money and machinery, brute force and muscle, are more precious than all the creations of Art, all the visions of Poetry, and all the mystical suggestions of Religion. Culture, taste, sensibility, and genius are only suffered to exist on condition of bowing down and worshipping the golden calf.”

What wonder, then, that in such a state of society, the rights, powers and splendours of intellect should be impaired or lost, and that taste and chivalry should perish ? It is the office of the Poet to discern and develop those riches of which the Materialistic rage of these times has despoiled the human mind, and to realise them for the Owner. It is the tendency of the age to devastate the soul, and to create an intellectual and moral desert ; but it is the task of the poetic master-mind to combat that tendency, and to make that desert smile. The potent spell of his gifts must change that barren region into a fruitful garden ; the creative power of his genius, which is genial and

clement as Summer's dawn, must rain fertility on that ungrateful soil; and, by opening up new founts of inspiration, by evoking vast and various mental forces, by quickening the pulses of heroic sentiment and furnishing lofty standards of principle, to purify and dignify our daily life, to redress the inequalities of fortune, and to restore the harmony that should exist between the Christian faith and the secular life of our people. We admit that this is, in a great measure, the essential task of Religion; the intellectual, political, and social developments of a Christian people ought to manifest, in distinct and striking outline, the high qualities which the faith imparts to all secular action that is docile to its influence. But Poetry is the hand-maid of Faith.

If God has placed us in an universe teeming with beauty and enchantment, it is in order that He might win our love; it is for this that He displays the wonders of His hand in the external creation. For this the round world was hung upon its axis, and the arched heavens spread around us, illumined by suns and starry systems; and all those objects of delight and splendour with which the Divine Bounty has embellished creation, are so many envoys sent to summon the surrender of our hearts. Now, Poetry is the language in which the beauties of Nature address themselves to the mind, and its liquid and melting numbers the channel along which they flow into the heart; in its imagery their glories are mirrored forth: its melody is the echo of their enchanting harmonies. The genius of the Poet makes him the oracle of Nature, for the *ars poetica* is the faculty of forming and of worthily manifesting an ideal of sublimity and beauty; or, in other words—the beautiful, sublime and pathetic, worthily conceived and adequately expressed by one whom the Creator has specially gifted for that end.

That FRANCIS DAVIS is a genuine child of song, a worthy interpreter of Nature's music, and a Pontiff of the Beautiful, is demonstrated in every line of his poetry; that he has formed a true conception of the Divine *aflatus*, and feels animated by a lively sense of the Poet's mission, is abundantly manifested in all his works, and especially in the opening lines of the "Tablet of Shadows." He goes forth accredited and dowered for his office by the Divine right of a royal intellect, by inflexible rectitude of principle, and by that profound moral and religious spirit with which his genius is imbued. His muse is instinct

with that Celtic pathos whose subtle spell dissolves the heart, and with that Celtic fire which kindles the generous rage or wakes the enthusiasm of the nations. "Tears lie in him and consuming fire, as lightning lurks in the drops of the Summer cloud." His verse teems with images that adequately translate the phenomena of Nature, for his spirit has drunk deeply at her founts of Awe and Mystery. He plays with her terrors and her splendours alike; and transfers to his page the thunders as well as the music of the spheres. He makes us familiar with the majestic swell of the tempest, and the plaintive sigh of the Summer wind; the hoarse rage of the torrent, and the low, flute-voice of the rivulet; the crash of the avalanche, and the graceful murmurs of the forest's wavy foliage and countless streams:

"For he knew that the Poet's heart chimed in accord
 With the musical notes of his Maker and Lord;
 He studied the volume of ocean and sod,
 Which beareth upon it the imprint of God;
 And the rhythmus of Nature, which never is wrong,
 Was the time of his thought and the tune of his song.
 For he caught his low notes from the bird on the tree,
 And his loud trumpet-tones from the tramp of the sea;
 Till the child of the people had builded a name,
 And the Weaver had woven a garment of fame!"

Our Poet's soul is attuned to that eternal Psalm which ocean and river, torrent and stream, planet and sun, system and star, pour forth to their Creator's throne, and gives it worthy expression—as witness the style in which he opens our ears to the grand *diapason* of the Universe:

"Old Earth, at heart heaves with poetic fire,
 Which, wanting voice, bursts ever forth in flowers!
 The giant cloud that swims the Summer heavens
 Is but a mighty instrument, which, waked
 By fiery spirits of the air, peals through
 This blue-roofed tabernacle of all time
 Its passionate psalmody. The wind itself—
 The ice-tongued autumn blast, that slays young scent
 And beauty in their flowery tents, and then
 Flings down his fleece and pearls to weave their shrouds
 Or rear their tombs—is, o'er his various toil,
 But part of music's universal soul!
 Yea, Nature's life, with all its mysticism,
 Is but the trembling of Diviner cords,
 Whose warm notes quicken wheresoe'er they will—
 A subtler minstrelsy—the sound, the voice
 Of an Almighty and Eternal strain!"

His sense of the Poet's office is manifest even in the doubt that he insinuates :

“ But hence, to dream
A coal from that high altar, where the seas
And sun and moon and all the starry worlds
Do humbly minister, hath ever touched
Those lips of mine.”

It is matter for painful surprise to find writers of great authority asserting that the highest end of Poetry is to produce pleasant emotions ; or, in other words, that poetic genius is merely a slave of the lamp to a superfine sensualism. But such writers must surely be incapable of appreciating either the gift or the office of Poetry, which is, in the natural order, the expression of man's aspirations for the freedom, bliss and greatness he had lost with the primitive integrity of his being ; and which it should incite him to recover by the practice of virtue, and by heroic devotion to truth and duty. That faculty must be sublime in its might for virtue and for heroism which Divine Wisdom itself has chosen as the medium of its revelations to man in Isaias, in Job, and in the Canticles. That faculty must be noble in its operations and its aims which animates us with the most lofty and magnificent hopes ; which has endowed us with such wealth of glorious sentiment ; which has replenished with wisdom and refined thought and passion the uttermost parts of the earth, and has illustrated the nations by splendid achievements in letters and in arts.

Shall we treat as objects of frivolous sport the creations of the Poet's soul, pregnant with intellectual strength and moral beauty ? Shall we regard as the sparkling flutter of the butterfly, or the transient glitter of the meteor, those imperishable flashes of genius which illuminate and vivify our existence here below ? No, thank Heaven ! The chastening and refining spirit that lives in the glowing and powerful Poetry still extant amongst us, must carry influences into the heart of this generation, like those which are breathed from the heart of Nature herself, and which will—at least here amongst ourselves—excite once more those great virtues and great passions that will relieve us from the deadening pressure which in these days threaten to bereave us of all genial hope and dignified spirit. If the traces and indications of poetical feeling seem, in these times, to be almost

effaced, it is only because the pure spirit is dulled, and its perceptions blunted, by the heavy external pressure of daily cares, and the chilling mechanical routine of actual life. Fancy, with her gushing feelings, her sympathies of memory and anticipation, is an intrinsic element of the human soul, ever ready to vibrate at the faintest touch, and to start into responsive life ; and the Poet that is faithful to the true instincts of his genius, will evoke these sympathies, and train them to the noblest ends.

We have, it is true, seen the sad spectacle of great and gifted spirits degrading themselves to unworthy servitudes, and who have poured the blaze of their reputation over the scandals of their age. We know that some of the noblest children of Song, men of surpassing genius, whom the world has glorified and raised to the stars, and whose track in the intellectual firmament can be traced throughout all time by the light of their renown, have made their talents pander to the vilest passions, and become the plausible apologists of every vice, and most accomplished tools of Satan : but this is simply to say what all must acknowledge—that a human intellect, however exquisite by its functions of creation, does not necessarily confer worth and dignity of character on its possessor. Such instances as these, so far from having the effect of lowering the standard of this finest of vocations, only serve to warn its professors against the perils of perverting the powers and ignoring the responsibilities of genius. But our Poet was not one of this caste. It is quite evident that DAVIS was fully aware of the responsibilities imposed by his exalted powers. His sense of the dignity and independence of his muse was supreme and almost fantastic in its delicacy. He felt conscious of a mission too solemn and stern in its obligations to suffer any warpings from chance, or to bend before the accidents of life, or to be surrendered to the needs of a necessitous lot ; and this high and manly character infused itself into his works, and forms one of their leading excellencies. It was this *sincerity*—this indisputable air of truth which Carlyle declares to be the prime merit of Burns, whom our author resembles in many ways, but chiefly in this—“ Here are no fabulous woes and joys; no hollow sentimentalities; no wiredrawn refinings either of thought or feeling ! The passion that is traced before us has glowed in a living heart ; the opinion he utters has risen in his own understanding, and been a light to his own steps.” How truly does a kindred Poet-spirit,

whose lines on DAVIS we have already quoted, discern these qualities when he sings :

“With a love for the true, and a hate for the wrong,
 With a clasp for the weak, and a blow for the strong ;
 With the natural strength of a passionate heart,
 Whose beatings and throbings are timed by no art ;
 With an eye never ruled by a treacherous lid ;
 With a mind never hampered when pedants have chid ;
 With the soul of a loving and chivalrous knight,
 Whose instinct is genius, whose language is light—
 A child of the people has builded a name,
 And the Weaver has woven a garment of fame !”

There is nothing false or frivolous in our Poet, and this alone would be sufficient to demonstrate his fidelity to his mission :

“He, indeed, is no ‘empty rhymers,’
 Lying ‘with idle elbow on the grass,’
 ‘Fitting his singing,’ like a cunning timer,
 To all men’s prides and fancies as they pass.”

A living Poet has told us that—

“In the old days of awe and keen-eyed wonder,
 The Poet’s song with blood-warm truth was rife ;
 . He saw the mysteries which circle under
 The outward shell and skies of daily life.”

And it seems to us that in the works of FRANCIS DAVIS there is much more “blood-warm truth,” and more insight into the unseen realities which underlie the shadows that are seen and felt, than in the works of any other living Poet. Our Poet draws us out of the dreary and commonplace present, and dissolves the chains that bind us down in the slavery of petty cares, by forcibly impressing upon us his own deep conviction, that the life of man is a great and dread reality, and his least thought and action a thing of infinite moment, since it is fraught with eternal results. This spirit, which pervades all his writing, reaches a pitch of surpassing grandeur in “Nathan and David”—a piece which, for sublime imagery and intense sensibility of passion, is scarcely excelled in the whole range of Poetry. Even had DAVIS written no other, this magnificent effusion would be quite sufficient to raise him to the rank of the first of living Poets. It is impossible to study this masterpiece of his hand without conceiving the highest opinion of the author’s power of imagination and force of expression. Even without referring the reader to the poem itself, the

passages which we quote in this Essay will warrant our assertion that no living bard possesses a more abundant share of imagination—the highest of poetic qualities. It is one of those pieces of which, in order to form a true estimate, one would require to be capable of reaching the Poet's ideal, and of sharing the “fine frenzy” of his intense conception—of ascending, in fact, to that congenial frame of mind in which the vision produced by the Poet's gorgeous and teeming fancy opens up before you, until you realise its living splendour. A power of gifted sight, “glowing from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,” similar to his who, when he had been reading Homer, magnified the ordinary men around him into the giants and gods of the “Iliad;” or to his who, on hearing *Hamlet* in the play make allusion to his father's ghost revisiting the “glimpses of the moon,” finds in the simile a magic spell which expands, in an instant, the theatre in which he sits to the boundless region of the spirit's home, in which this earth of ours dwindles to a little speck of glimmering moonlight.

Genius produces its highest effects in kindred and sympathising spirits, who discern and appreciate the great and impressive scenes that it creates. A great epic, for example, presents to their minds' eye a spectacle as various and as beautiful as that which a fine landscape offers to the eye of sense, and produces in their hearts the tumult of emotions which would be caused by the forces, the terrors, and the wild luxuriance or the inclement desolation of Nature; because such as these place themselves in harmony with all that is great in Nature and in Art, observe them in their most transcendent phases, and dispose themselves for the reception of their grandest effects. If you would observe a tempest in its terrific magnificence, you must see it not on land, where its fury is bounded by the solid earth, but on the ocean, where it meets no obstacle save the yielding waters, which lend it new elements of awe. In like manner, if you would estimate the stately play of genius, you must follow it to the sublime altitudes in which it dwells, where it ranges uncontrolled amid objects and events most pregnant with passion, and where its action meets with no obstacle save yielding minds and hearts, which may become new material for its all-embracing strain. *Ludens in orbe terrarum* may be applied to the great Poet in the loftiest hour of his inspiration and the resistless sweep of his song! If, in considering “Nathan and David,” we place ourselves in harmony with the richly gifted spirit

of its author, he will give us back our own feelings, varied into powerful Poetry, or at all events exalted in thought, language, and passion. But in order that this may take place, we must dispose ourselves to bask in the splendour of his sunny genius, to revel in the soothing radiance of his mellow numbers, and to surrender our hearts to the trembling emotions of his melting pathos.

In the Miltonic grandeur of the opening stanza it would seem that the created imagination is sinking back on its own nothingness, dazzled and awed by its approach to the inaccessible light that veils the Throne whence Nathan's commission issues. The divine anger gathering on the brow of the Most High, and conveying the Prophet's message, is depicted in these unrivalled lines :

“ And the lightnings that leaped from *His day-drinking frown,*
Danced over the lips of a Heaven-taught one.”

Where shall we match the sublime images we have here italicised ? Nowhere, certainly, in the entire range of profane literature. Olympus, trembling at every flutter of the sacred honours that crowned the brow of Jove, falls far short of it. A figure of equal majesty can only be found in the inspired page whence the idea of the poem was derived, and where the glance of a God in anger is made to dry up the rivers and the ocean, to cause the islands to fly away, and the heavens to roll up like a scroll !

We find imagery of equal grandeur in the “ Summer of Soul,” where our Poet describes the prodigies that shall herald the advent of the Eternal Judge, and the effect of the Soul's favourable judgment, in lines that beggar praise :

“ Till the days of our planet be numbered and full—
Till some dawn shall look down through the terrors, aghast,
Where the seas from their keepers convulsively burst
By a might more than Nature's, in mountains amassed,
Like a morsel of dew, shall be sipped by the blast!

Then, the stars of the morning shall sing and expire,
The sun from the heavens be molten and cast,
The four mighty winds shall each drop at his lyre,
And the firmament, rolled on a tempest of fire,
Leave silence, a moment, transfixed o'er the pyre ;
Till the smile of the Highest, while filling the vast,
Light a way for thy feet where the way shall not tire—
Then Winter and Death shall for ever have passed,
And the SUMMER OF SOUL be eternal at last !”

We learn, with regret, that the whole of the first stanza of “ Nathan

and David" has been accidentally omitted from the poem in the present volume. The omission was occasioned by the severe illness of the Poet when preparing his works for the Press. As the solemnity of the exordium is admirably adapted to induce a disposition for receiving the profound sensations that the piece is calculated to impress, we deem ourselves happy in being able to quote it here :

" Then the glory-crowned King of Creation looked down
 From His throne in the land of Eternity's sun,
 And the lightnings that leaped from His day-drinking frown,
 Danced over the lips of a Heaven-taught one :
 And the soul of the seer grew a sorrowful thing.
 And his burning heart heaves on each fiery string,
 For the lips of the Lord to his spirit's ear cling
 In a language all fearful and proudly their own :
 Pealing 'Up,' pealing 'Up,' unto Israel's King,
 With a crushing curse-bolt in thine every tone ;
 And the inspired stood
 By the guilty of blood,
 Till the dark future groaned as it frowned on the past,
 For they met, and each veil from their nakedness cast,
 As the prophet's eye, crazed, met the fallen one's throne."

The august function which Nathan discharges lifts him above all earthly fear. He moves undismayed through the atmosphere of awe that surrounds a royal presence, and holds to the lips of the guilty monarch the chalice of wrath, of which he is the divinely-appointed bearer :

" Oh ! the seer little recked all the gloss and the glare
 Of the gold, of the purple, or chrysolite's sheen,
 For his heart lay embalmed by the spirit of prayer,
 And his soul through the odours broke proudly serene ;
 Yet the Heaven-anointed hath knelt at a throne
 That is dark with the blood of the lowly and lone."

The prophet's agonizing sense of the King's critical peril, should he still indulge a treacherous repose on the very brink of that steep that overhangs the infernal precipices, finds expression in this moving strain of lamentation :

" Oh ! the peace of Jehovah from David hath flown,
 If he sit by His servant and ope not his ears
 To the woe and the wail
 That give life to my tale ;
 To a crime by each pulse in our nature abhorred ;
 To a crime that for vengeance, by curse and by sword,
 Even now at the Holy of Holies appears."

The impassioned spiritual pain, begotten of a God-like tenderness and pity, which, in its deepest anguish, thinks but of saving the creature for whom it suffers, and the measureless woe, inspired by a lively apprehension of the infinite doom upon which the beloved one is rushing, is expressed with a sublimity that has rarely been surpassed :

“ And the soul of the seer trembles forth through each tone,
As his words had been thoughts steeped for ages in tears.”

We refer the reader to the matchless stanzas in which Nathan's parable is rendered with inimitable grace and pathos : and also to those in which the King's indignation against the supposed offender is powerfully depicted. David's generous rage turns on himself when, by the prophet's fearless application of the parable, his guilt is brought home to him, and he mourns his sin with a penitential sorrow so intense, that it restores to his soul the immortal bloom of grace, and renders him worthy to be the exemplar and the inspired minstrel of repentant love. Animated by its spirit, the Royal Psalmist becomes for all ages the Apostle of that “ Angel of Anguish” (to borrow our Poet's transcendent figure) which revivifies the fallen soul ; which refreshes, enriches, and embellishes it ; which fosters in it the growth of virtue, quickens the impulses of grace, and restores verdure and beauty and repose to a spiritual soil that had been withered by the blasts of sin and desolated by the storms of passion !

We earnestly commend to the study of the Reader this exquisite poem, which deserves to live for ever in the hearts and memories of men. It manifests in high perfection those qualities which all great authorities recognise as examples of the sublime in literary production—namely, a grandeur and sublimity of conception ; a pathetic enthusiasm ; an elegant formation and disposal of figures ; a splendid diction ; and a weight and dignity in the composition. Through it alone the world cannot fail to discern in DAVIS the possession of a most rare genius, devoted, with a conscientious earnestness almost as rare, to the very noblest issues. The value of such a man to his country and his kind is incalculable. If the age of chivalry is gone, Poetry, which is the nurse of chivalry and of every other element of National greatness, still survives amongst us : and therefore the possession of a true Poet, whose works, like those of our Author, instil the high sensibilities

that are of the very essence of chivalry, is a blessing beyond conception. We need never despair of our country so long as well-principled Poetry continues to influence the public sentiment: for, not only will it animate and cheer our strife for National liberty, but it will eventually rescue our intellect from the foreign thraldom under which it groans, and our hearts and lives from the gripe of Mammon.

But we must keep ourselves practically aware of the fact, that our only chance of realizing these results, as well as of making head against the growing influences that threaten us with literary extinction, is by strenuously maintaining and cherishing the genius still existing amongst us. The cultivation of a native literature is our great safeguard against the spirit of the age, which is fatal alike to imagination and generous sentiment, and against those foreign influences at variance with our National character, to which our rising intellect is so much exposed. An ill-regulated and universal devotion to petty, selfish and material interests, could not fail to degrade the National intellect and debase the National spirit to such a degree, that it would become every day less susceptible of poetic influences, and less capable of being stirred by lofty impulses. Poetry, and with it high principle, would fade from its character and annals. It would lose all great and commanding ambitions. It would no longer possess the brains to plan, or the energy to execute, daring and extensive enterprises. Its National character and acts would become petty and despicable, and it would speedily sink into eternal contempt!

The decline of Principle produces degeneracy of Taste, and this in turn leads to the final extinction of Genius. The decline of Roman vigour was coeval with that of Roman virtue, and genius languished as honour and valour faded away. The genius of the Augustan age subsided to the mean level of that of the Lower Empire, in the same way as the diadem of Augustus became degraded to the brow of Augustulus. France was lost the moment she made faith and virtue a national jest by crowning scepticism, mockery and perfidy, in the shape of the incarnate demons of these vices—Voltaire and Rousseau; and when “Cervantes sneered Spain’s chivalry away,” there vanished with it that magnanimity of character which made her the mistress of land and sea, as well as the home of sanctity and heroism.

But Ireland has been preserved from this vital decay by her Faith and her Poetry, the only possessions that she can call her own, and

which the combined force and fraud of the mightiest and meanest* Empire of modern times could not tear from her grasp! No! the unbending spirit has *not* been broken, notwithstanding the lament of our great National Bard; and it is her determination to stand erect, in the still subsisting struggle of ages for Faith and Freedom—a struggle unique in human annals—a struggle the most splendid ever maintained against tremendous odds. And this deathless devotion to Faith and Poesy has preserved her National spirit immutable and intact! “National Poetry,” says our Author’s great namesake and twin-brother of the muse—the ‘Minstrel of Mallow’—“is the very flowering of the soul, the greatest evidence of its health, the greatest excellence of its beauty. Its melody is balsam to the senses. It presents the most dramatic events, the largest characters, the most impressive scenes and the deepest passions, in the language most familiar to us. It magnifies and ennobles our hearts, our intellects, our country, and our countrymen; binds us to the land by its condensed and gem-like history; to the future, by example and aspiration. It solaces us in trouble, fires us in action, prompts our invention, sheds a grace beyond the power of luxury round our homes; is the recognised envoy of our minds among all nations and to all time.” Ireland contains an exhaustless fount of inspiration in National Poetry. The poetic character is strongly marked in all primitive races, as witness the language and music of the Hebrews, Chaldeans, Greeks, Cymri, and especially of the Celtic race, of which Ireland, according to Niebuhr and Mitchelet, is the first-born. Hence, Ireland has been, from time immemorial, a land of Song. Her National life still retains and cherishes all the centres and sources of Poetic impulse; her great heart still throbs with the music, the pathos and passion, that inspired the heroism and kindled the enthusiasm of our remotest

* “England,” says Sidney Smith, “seems to have treated Ireland much in the same way as Mrs. Brownrigg treated her apprentice—for which Mrs. Brownrigg is *hanged* in the first volume of the ‘Newgate Calendar.’ Upon the whole, we think the apprentice is better off than the Irishman, as Mrs. B. merely starves and beats her, without any attempt to prohibit her from going to any shop, or praying at any Church her apprentice might select, and once or twice, if we remember rightly, Brownrigg appears to have felt some compassion. Not so Old England, who indulges rather in—a steady baseness, uniform brutality, and unrelenting oppression.”

ancestors. And thus, as a learned writer who has studied our ancient annals observes, we perceive the existence of a native minstrelsy in Ireland from the landing of the Milesians almost to our own time, in one unbroken wreath of song.* The accomplished excellence of early Irish Poetry attests the high civilization of Ancient Ireland. "It is no wonder," says Mr. Hayes, "that Ireland should be rich in Poetic records, for in the remotest ages her kings and chieftains were the munificent patrons of literature. They founded colleges for the education of bards, whose time of study was at least seven years." These well authenticated facts will show that Ireland was a land of culture and civilization long before the rise of the Roman power, and many ages before the ancestors of her oppressors and defamers had emerged from barbarism.

An Irish Minstrelsy has always subsisted in Ireland, and it still retains its original vigour, grace, and power. The spirit and feeling of the nation express themselves to-day in a strain unbroken since the days

" When her kings,
With the standard of green unfurled,
Led the Red Branch Knights to danger."

Next to our Faith itself, our Minstrelsy has been the chief vehicle of our National spirit, bearing it over the storms of ages—sheltering it amid the clash of nations. It stood by the desert fountain of our National life, pouring into the stream the golden vial of inspiration, heroic passion, chivalry, and romance. It animated and cheered our strife for Liberty. It neutralised the depraving effects of foreign vice and fraud, baffled the evil schemes of English policy, and often compensated, by the victories of the lyre, for reverses in the field. It not only nurtured our spirit of sacrifice for Faith and Freedom, but furnished channels for transmitting those elements of intellectual

* We have sketches of more than two hundred Irish writers, principally poets, from the days of Amergin, the chief bard of the Milesian Colony, down to the beginning of the present century. Their poems are, in many instances, still extant, from the hymns of St. Columb to the Lamentation of M'Laig, the biographer and family bard of Brien Boru; and still downwards to the dreamy allegory of the proscribed poets of the Penal Days. The stores of native minstrelsy which Ireland possesses, both in the memory of her people and the cabinet of the antiquarian, are astonishing, when we consider the characteristics of her history and the condition of her people for the last seven centuries."—HAYES' *Ballads of Ireland*.

revival, that shall, at no distant day, consecrate and crown our struggle. Her Poetic genius, which is the pulse of Ireland's life, is indestructible, and this fact alone affords sufficient indication of the brilliant and influential future for which the Nation is reserved.

This vital energy, this perennial bloom of our country's genius, revealed itself in our days, through the literature and poetry of "Young Ireland," with a vivifying power that was capable of "creating a soul under the ribs of death." Our Poet was speedily attracted within the charmed circle of that brilliant company, which gave adequate voice to the bounding enthusiasm kindled by the genius of O'Connell, and nourished by the great and impressive scenes of the National Agitation :

"They were a band of brethren, richly graced,
With all that most exalts the sons of men—
Youth, courage, honour, genius, wit well-placed—
When shall we see their parallels again?
The very flower and fruitage of their age,
Destined for duty's cross or glory's page."

Our Author, in a few vivid touches, brings into our mind the climax of that great National movement which aimed at raising Ireland to the sublime eminence of a free destiny :

"Remember the proud year forty-three,
Ye men of the steel-toned era,
Whose full hearts heaved like a hill-hemmed sea,
Round Mullaghmast and Tara ;
When the fiery foam of out-gushing words
From leaders, stern and gifted,
Broke over your ears like the clash of swords,
By conquering bands uplifted !"

The first sparks of Poetic fire struck from our Author's genius reached the public through the medium of that illustrious journal, which, thirty years ago, revivified our National spirit, and in which were concentrated the rays of the brightest constellation of genius that ever shed glory round a great cause. In its "Poets' Corner" glittered those immortal gems of Song that have since become fixed stars in the firmament of Poesy. "A bright particular star" of that galaxy still, thank God, shines over our land, and its beams will, we trust, help to dispel the delusions by which our National intellect is fettered and degraded, and, as of old,

"Kindle here a living blaze
That nothing shall withstand!"

His fugitive pieces contributed to that great journal appeared but seldom it is true ; but there was consolation in the fact, that if they resembled angels' visits in their rarity, they resembled them also in their ethereal splendour.

But the "Lispings" of his muse, which float down to us through the golden haze of the Young Ireland period, have not been permitted, like the leaves of roses that blossom in a solitude, to drift away and die upon the breeze ; they have been lovingly treasured and woven into a wreath that shall be green for ever on the brow of Erin !

Ireland is deeply indebted to FRANCIS DAVIS for the notes of thrilling melody that he has contributed to the incessant chorus of her National Song. The full force of his poetical talents appears in his *National* pieces. All the beauty of description, the richness of invention, the glow of imagination, the tenderness and depth of pathos, are here displayed in the most exquisite harmony of numbers. If it be true that lyrical poetry requires the highest degree of inspiration and intellectual development, then DAVIS, whose genius is essentially lyrical, must, on the strength of these effusions, take high rank as a Poet. His descriptions of Ulster scenery are very fine ; but on this part our limits will not permit us to enter, and we can only direct the notice of the Reader to their picturesque beauty.

The "Minstrel of Mallow" is a strain of lamentation by which a Nation's tears, shed over the early grave of the Warrior Bard of modern Erin, are crystallized by the touch of genius, and made eternal. The effect of this poem is to evoke feelings of a refined and tender pity for the youthful and gifted hero, whose pulse of life the icy hand of death had prematurely stilled, and whose mighty spirit passed away, wafted to the "Land of the Chosen" on his country's sighs—an intellectual anguish, inspired by a true appreciation of those unrivalled attributes so suddenly snatched from his country's cause in a vital crisis in her destiny. His mental and moral endowments are transfigured in gorgeous imagery that dazzle the understanding and captivate the heart. The Poet transfers to all hearts the passionate grief that agitates his own for the loss of "the spirit that is gone" :

" Weep, weep for the spirit that, lava-like, dashing
For music, in might and in brilliancy flashing,
Rushed forth from his lyre so proudly, so fleetly—
Ah, who shall e'er strike it or touch it so sweetly ?"

The removal of such a man at such a time, and under circumstances so tragic and affecting, was an incomparable theme for the poetry of mourning, and the genius of our Poet rose to the occasion. The sublime sadness that is breathed in these lines conveys to our hearts the intense feeling of an irreparable bereavement, suffered not only by our Country but by humanity itself. We cannot quit our notice of this undying memorial of departed genius and moral heroism without directing the Reader's attention to the magnificent simile, in which is imaged forth the effect of the noble and tempestuous emotions of a lofty and poetic soul on the frail tenement of clay in which it is “cribbed, cabined, and confined”:

“Look ye ! when o'er Mallow the wild tempest fieth,
And o'er the broad blue of the firmament lieth
The cloven cloud-temples where slumber the thunder,
The spirit they cradled hath rent them asunder ;
And thus has the temple of clay that has perished
Been rent by the might of the lightnings it cherished.”

Had the “Minstrel of Mallow” lived, he would undoubtedly have been the leading spirit of his time. He bore the impress of a threefold greatness—of character, of genius and of action—that would have asserted imperial sway over the minds and passions of men, and would have won the love and allegiance of the Youth of Ireland, whose energies he would have trained and directed to the noblest enterprises. By his high and audacious conception of the mental, moral and material capacities and resources of his country; by his use of the golden glories of her traditions; by his commanding energies—the enchantments of his song—the charm of his eloquence—he would have infused into them an intolerance of oppression and a spirit of haughty chivalry, that would have been adequate to the achievement of Freedom in the face of an embattled world. The spell of his genius is, in many respects, as mighty to-day as when it caused the heart of Young Ireland to leap with patriotic emotion and martial ardour; but we miss in these days that burning sensibility—that scorn of National wrong—“that chastity of honour which felt a stain like a wound,” which Thomas Davis impressed on his generation. They seem to have faded from our character in the long series of National humiliations and disasters through which our people have passed since his day. This degeneracy of National spirit is treated with grinding scorn by our Poet in the “Song of Sadness :”

"Ye raised a spirit in your might
That walked the Isle in earthless glory,
And hurled a light from height to height,
Through many a darksome hour before ye.
It grew, it rose, till flesh and blood,
Your strongest, fiercest, foeman felt it ;
But when sublimely great it stood,
Ye fluttered round it till it melted."

Not only do the works of our Author display a rich abundance of fancy and imagery, but they also shew, as we see by these National lyrics—that he is a master of all true poetical beauty. They manifest not merely great imagination and pathetic power; but also that tragic and heroic grandeur—that deep solemnity, engendered by constant meditation on life and man's eternal destiny, with which DAVIS's life and sentiment are so deeply imbued, and which appear so vividly in all his works; but especially in his devotional pieces.

"Kathleen Ban Adair" teems with romantic and tragic interest, to which the confluence of emotions arising from one's deep sympathy with the patriotism, heroic courage, bold and defiant scorn of a treacherous and dastard foe, manifested by one of the principal figures of the piece, combined with melting ruth for the fate of hapless innocence, tender devotion, and peerless beauty in the other; largely contribute.

His Allegories, in which after the manner of the bards of other days, Ireland is personified, afford additional instances of the versatility and opulence of his genius. In these, the Poet invests Erin of the Sorrows with ideal grace and beauty, and excites in us that resistless fascination inspired by the deep tragedy of her long and unflinching martyrdom and her romantic wrongs. Of these, "My Betrothed" and "The Lovely Forsaken" claim our especial notice, not only by reason of the deep beauty that lies in them and the indwelling grace and tenderness of their spirit, but also of their passionate force and the thrilling power of their pathos. Of these latter qualities there are many perfect examples to be found in these works of our Author, now (owing to the exertions of a number of Belfast gentlemen devoted to Irish Song) published for the first time, especially, "The Wonderful One," "The Brother's Grave," "The Light Across the Cloud." Amongst his love sonnets we distinguish those notes of sweetest measure in which "Nannie" is wooed in trembling delicacy and fervour of feeling. "Flowers" is replete with poetic imagery. We quote the first stanza

of a poem every line of which is beyond encomium, and which deserves to make the pilgrimage of eternity in company with Shelley's "Cloud :"

" Flowers that wave through the fringe by the river—
Sun-drops of love ! I'd be with you for ever ;
Down where ye gleam, where the breezes have wrangled
Flashes of light, by the grasses entangled—
Droppings of wings, that round Seraphim quiver—
Beautiful things, I'd be with you for ever !"

The time has not yet come for forming an estimate of the true value of the works of FRANCIS DAVIS ; for, this being the first time that there has been any attempt made to present *so many* of them in a collective form to the public, no opportunity has been hitherto afforded for considering his Poetry at large. Although the exceeding merit of the poems he has already published was abundantly recognised when they appeared, still, it must be admitted that justice can scarcely be done to a part of any great writer's works without having reference to the whole, since every such portion has a value beyond its intrinsic worth, as being part and lot of a great mind and having co-relations with every other part. Moreover, they derive additional interest from the extreme difficulties and discouragements that their author had to overcome. He was unaided by collegiate education, or education of any kind, with the exception of the few casual scraps of knowledge picked up in his earlier years, and commencing, as is the case with most of us, at the knee of his mother—a wise, loving and, it would appear, most intelligent woman. To her, we are informed, he traces both his love of music and of poetry. By her unaided teaching he became such a proficient in reading and spelling, that when he first went to school at the age of seven or eight, he was regarded with astonishment.

Immediately after entering this his first school in the village of Hillsborough, it became customary, we are told, to call him up to the teacher's desk when visitors appeared, that they might hear his reading. Frequently thus was he called upon to read before the then Marquis and Marchioness of Downshire.

His school life, however, having closed about the tenth year of his age, his subsequent knowledge was acquired without any teacher, during brief intervals, snatched from labour at an ill-paid craft.

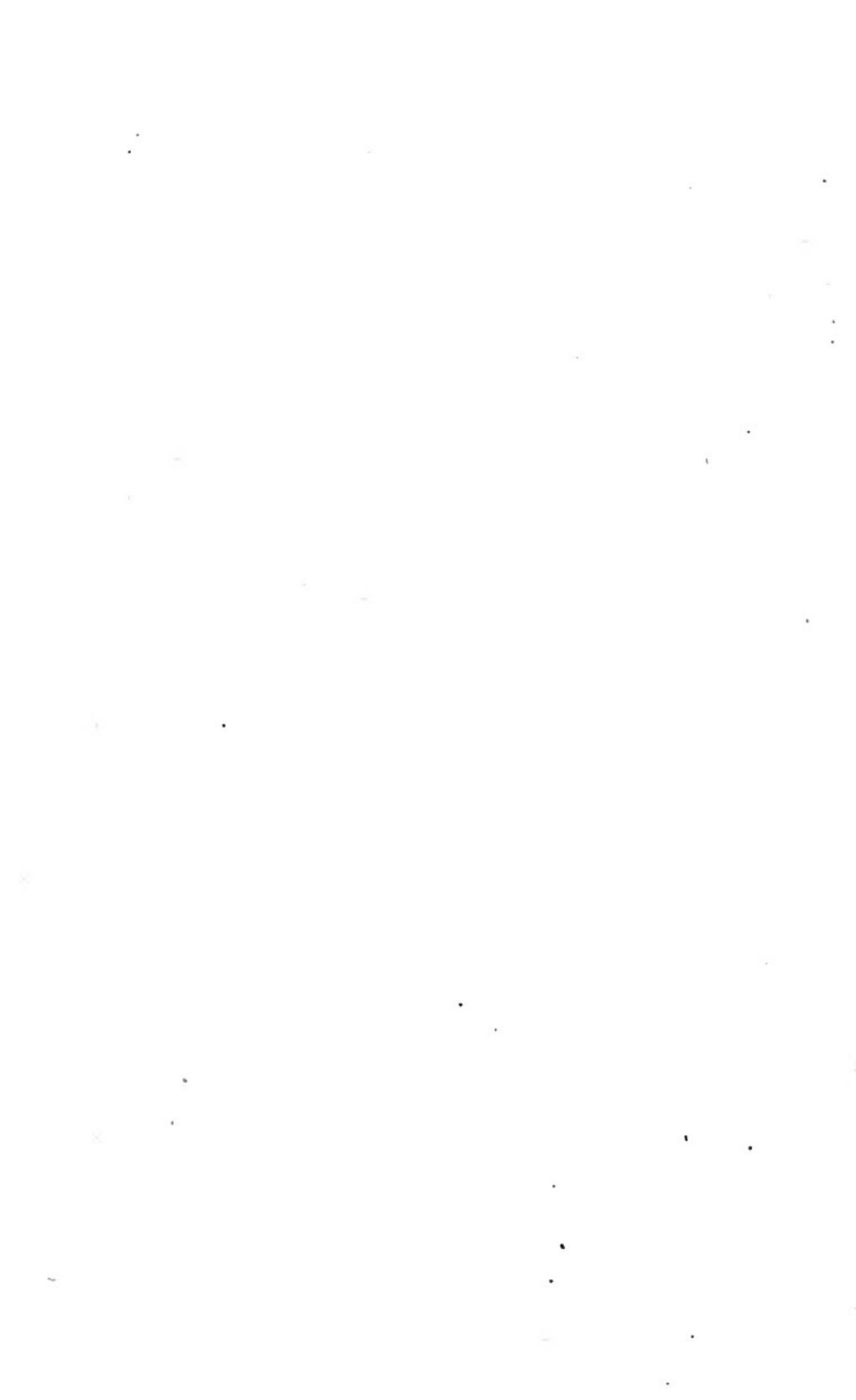
In after years he taught himself French, and became in a short time that he could read and translate it freely enough. Later on in

life he essayed, without any teacher, Latin, Greek and Gaelic; but the necessities of life always thrust themselves in, sternly forbidding any lengthened indulgences in these fascinating studies. Like the gifted and ill-fated Clarence Mangan, the greater portion of his life was embittered by the cold neglect or the cynical scorn of a stoney-hearted world, which so seldom recognises true excellence, and he was doomed to the grinding drudgery of a sordid employment. He experienced great vicissitudes and many trials. Now, the honored guest of nobles—for, like Burns, he had “dinnered wi’ a lord,” and was even petted by Royalty itself—anon, the dinnerless and wandering outcast; to-day, the idol of popular worship; to-morrow, the starving exile, exposed to the inhumanity of a British manufacturing town, and “happy to obtain a boiled potato from a passing beggar”—yet never suffered the slightest diminution of that manly independence, not to say antique magnanimity of character—that delicacy of taste and sentiment—that virtuous and religious feeling, which dignify his life and writings.

Most marvellous it is, that he should produce works of such high excellence under the pressure of so much difficulty—Poetry “which,” as one of his reviewers observes, “is rich in thought, deep at times as an Artesian well—thought literally fathomless, where we might dive for pearls and gems of priceless value, bring up plenty to the surface, and yet never exhaust the supply.” Creating them, too, in such abundance, that many of his poems as would form a considerable volume have been crushed out of the present publication. We must measure Davis not by the greatness he has actually achieved, though this would be a high standard, but by the greatness he was capable of achieving under more fortunate circumstances. “An educated man,” says a great writer of our day, “stands, as it were, in the midst of a boundless arsenal and magazine, filled with all the weapons and engines which man’s skill has been able to devise from the earliest time; and he works accordingly with a strength borrowed from all past ages. How different is *his* state who stands on the outside of that storehouse, and feels that its gates must be stormed or remain for ever shut against him! His means are the commonest and rudest: the mere work done is no measure of his strength. A dwarf behind his steam-engine may remove mountains: but no dwarf will hew them down with a pickaxe: and he must be a Titan that hurls them abroad with his arms.”

Let us ask ourselves to-day, as Posterity will ask, how we have served and honoured this man of illustrious genius and heroic life, who has devoted both to our national, mental, and moral elevation? If we feel conscious, as is too truly the case, that we have treated him with ingratitude and neglect, let us now, *in the living present*, rectify our relations towards him. Let us be prompt to rescue from all apprehension of penury the remnant of a noble life that has been spent in our service, and the last of a band of intellectual heroes that has shed undying lustre on our land. Shame, indelible shame, will be our portion if FRANCIS DAVIS be permitted to swell the long roll of men of genius who are neglected during life, and, to borrow the fine simile of Lord Lytton, "are aided and honoured only when their sepulchre becomes their throne."







LEAVES WITH LENGTHENED LIGHTS AND
SHADOWS.

Pages 9, 96, 277, 385

LEAVES FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE :

UNDER THE SMOKE AND OVER THE DEW.

Pages 121-276

LEAVES FROM FIELD AND FORUM :

SHED IN THE STORMS.

Pages 119-250

LEAVES FROM SACRED SCENES ;

OR, SONGS OF THE DESERT.

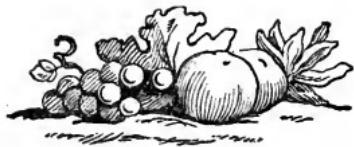
Pages 343-382

LEAVES OF MANY TINTS :

CAUGHT AS THEY CAME.

Pages 399-633

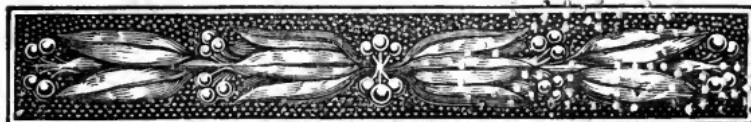




Minnie Blair.







Earlier and Later Leaves:

OR,

An Autumn Gathering.

M I N N I E B L A I R .

PART I.

THREE sorts of things below did God at first
 Make beautiful—yea *four*, when making, made
 He wondrous fair : the trees, the flowers, and, oh !
The human form and face—the last, how oft,
 Methinks, a living glory to behold !
The last, alone, 'twould sometimes *seem* have changed !
'Mong trees or flowers but little choice have I,
 So lovely seem they all. I never look
Upon a bush, the meanest shrub or leaf,
Or on a daisy at my foot, without
 Some stirring, in the heart, of thanks to Him
Who bade them grow, and gave me eyes to see
 How very fair they are. And days there were,
For many, many years, when never looked
I on a wayside hedge or bough, when flushed
With April's tender green, that did not start
The minor music of my soul to reach
A major key—that did not make my heart
Sing out, "I never shall grow old while bush

Or bough my eye can see put on the green
 Of Spring!" A pleasant fancy while it lived—
 'Tis dead, or comes not now! And I have walked
 On ways that wore no green, and sought, within
 The human face, for light to wake the song
 That, through my soul, yon hedgerows waked of old ;
 Nor sought I still in vain. I never looked
 On human face, however dimmed, or chang'd
 By things adverse to that idea, pure
 As grand in the eternal mind, when cold,
 Dead matter first took living form, without
 Perceiving, through its darkening veil, some trait
 Of that whereof are angels made.

I've looked
 On many faces, scathed and seared to strange
 Unlovliness; what then? I cannot see
 My own, I've sighed, and, trembling, gat me on.
 And I have looked on faces in the crowd,
 And on secluded ways—on faces filled
 With beauty, as the moon is filled with light;
 But never looked I yet on human face
 To match in lovliness with that of your's,
 Sweet Minnie Blair—most beauteous Minnie Blair!

This Minnie Blair and I were playmates, once ;
 We went to school together—often fond
 Of linking fingers as we trudged, zig-zag,
 Along. Near neighbours lived we, she and I.
 A glen, a stream, a hill, and two short fields
 Where nibbled sheep, were all that lay between
 Her father's house and mine. We went to school,
 I've said, and every morning, neat, at nine,
 We met at Harry's stile—'twas not arranged
 Our meeting so; but silent, secret will,
 Or custom, one might kindlier suppose,
 With both, inclined the one who reached it first
 To wait upon the other; thence, along
 A path—a short-cut through the fields—we strolled,
 With wondrous waste of walking towards the school.

Ah, then, how often were we late ! We had,
You see, so much grave matter to discuss :
She had a world of printed cottons—odds
And ends, of finger-length and breadth—which came
Of her good mother's work in making robes
For rustic belles. Then I, it was presumed,
Had such a nice perception as to tint
And pattern, and the fitness of this shred
Or that, to match the fresh complexion—soon
To fade !—of Minnie's last new doll. For me,
I had more marbles far than books, and, then,
Was no great judge (which Minnie was) of which
'Twere best to make a *taw*. Besides all these,
Were Minnie's flowers and mine, fresh plucked—a bunch
Of daisies each, with, maybe, here and there
A sprig of southernwood or thyme. 'Twas strange
She ever fancied her's less fair than mine ;
And I, my own ne'er half so fair as her's,
Though why, wherein or how they differed, ne'er
Could we in words make clearly out ; but still
Concluded by a glad exchange. So passed
Our mornings, many a morn ; and every one,
Too fleet—too soon ; and every one with some
Bewildering proof of Minnie's bravery. Why,
She should have been a sister of Saint George,
If not Saint George himself, who long ago
The queer green dragon slew, as stated by
My last and most veracious Christmas prize !

Oh, how I longed in those dear days to write
A book, like this Saint George, or that Sir Guy ;
To tell the wondering peoples, pent in town,
Our daily dangers, and the powers, sublime,
Wherewith my maid of Orleans' brought us through !

Alas ! what age or state for man below,
Wherein he shall be free from enemies ?
We, also, had our foe ! He lurked about
A farmstead on our way, whence, every morn,
He scented our approach, and barred our path,

With more methought, than many boggles' thirst
For blood. Of course he had the power to come
In any shape he chose, for goblins still
Had such ; but he, perhaps, from being void
Of *fancy*, as to form, or, through *some* whim
Unknown, was changeless in his shape, and still
Appeared, as 'twere, a huge, brown-speckled fowl,
Pretending to conduct a flock ; and wore
A strange, greased-looking helm of whitish scales
Done faintly up in blue, which often changed
To red, and ended in large scarlet flaps
That smote his breast. I feared this monster ! Meet
Him when I would, it was his wont to spread
A mighty fan-like tail, within whose shade
Rolled, like a globe, he, in a barbarous tongue—
Which Minnie, as it struck me then pronounced
“The *Turkish*”—set himself with foul (or fowl's)
Intent, to do us grievous bodily harm !

Oh, happy city life, where goblins live
But in our books, or up the *chimney*, whence
We know they cannot come ; while little folks
Avoid all clamorous voice !

Our grand-dad's death

Had brought us out to heir the farm, where all
Was new, and everything was fair, save yon
Foul goblin, *alias gobbling fowl*, and one
Grim wolf, I feared to pass, that eyed me still,
With head aslant and munching mouth, from 'mongst
The sheep. Kind-hearted Minnie !—how she tried
To laugh me from my fears ! 'Twas but a sheep
Itself, she said, that had been shorn. I could
Not doubt my Minnie's word ; but, oh, whene'er
I oped my picture-book, I found 'twixt wolves
And sheep without their wool, my judgment, like
My faith in such queer things being harmless, was
But weak, indeed.

The picture-book of life,
Whereof some darker pages I have conned,

Has not, I fear, on this grave point of wolves
And sheep, improved my judgment much ; for, far
Too oft, my faith—when lovingly enlarged
O'er earlier dreams of hurt—has played me false ;
Ah, very false, indeed ! 'Tis hence, I find
It wondrous sweet, at times, to turn me from
The fair, or goodly-favoured Harms I've met
In after life, and muse, as now, upon
The days when much that looked unlovable
Was only so *in look*. Oh, happy days !
Oh, blessed childhood ! when our fears and griefs,
Like structures raised upon the painted palm
Of midnight vision, melt and pass before
The sense they've roused to action, gathers light
To ascertain their form ! But, wherefore this ?

Thus passed the mornings of my long-ago—
The morns of Minnie Blair and me, and each
Too swift—too bright !

"Why—late ? how fast we came!"
So often late ! so many things to blame !
And none, when fairly questioned, bearing blame
At all ! Hence, we arranged, eve after eve,
Next morn should find us there too soon ; but, lo !
Here's still the same. "Ha-ha ! too late ! too late—
The morning lessons all are by !"

Ah, Sloan !

Ah, jeering, sneering Bobbie Sloan ! How much
You love to meet us at the door with that
Eternal taunt, "Too late !"

I see this Sloan—

If meeting not our entrance, at the door—
A mighty workman at his desk, where, head
Awry, he wields a snoring pen along
The sheet, he maketh aught but milky, while
His fitful mouth, now closed, now open all
Its width, as if that ductile feature caught
Its form and wriggle from each hook and crook.
And mighty, O, he wrote ! I see him—hush !

He sees not us—we steal so softly—nay,
 Not he ! I see him, busiest boy in school ;
 But ever do I hear—as if his pen,
 In honest haste, had shaped a *snore*, beyond
 Its usual depth, to words—“ Too late, again,
 Bill Shaw and Minnie Blair ! ”

And now I see

The kind old master, cane in hand, his eyes
 Raised o'er his glasses, and his form—that long,
 Thin form, so hidden in the ample, nay,
 The *empty* folds of his unchanging coat—
 His *one* immortal grey !—thrown back on that
 Low chair. I see what then I did not see
 So well as since, that spark of gentler soul—
 Of brighter nature—which, betwixt his eyes—
 Refusing to be *all* a frown, became
 So oft a smile. This struggle of his dark
 And bright, gone by, it was his wont to don
 The grand heroics of his wrath :

“ A-ha !

“ Come up, you pair of ramblers—triflers—jouks
 “ From school at lesson time ! I tell you what—
 “ Hem !—what it is——” O, most indignant cane,
 That still forgot thy course in coming down !—
 “ I'll couple you together, like a pair
 “ Of break-ditch sheep ! I'll cut you up as small,
 “ I will, as *horses*, when, a-ha ! I've time !
 “ There—for the *present*—take your seats ; but, *mind*,
 “ You'll mend—a-ha ! ”

We did ; but, not just then !

Brave little Minnie Blair ! Those cuttings-up
 That *were* to be, had little power to take
 The laughter from your rich blue eye, or keep
 Your ringlets from the winds, or give
 Your tiny feet a sober motion, when,
 A while at noon, we romped along the field
 Which was our “ playground”—boys and girls, in one
 Wild hurly-burly maze of head and heart !

Yet, this was oft an hour that made me sad ;
 And all from that sly, sneering fellow, Sloan—
 Bob Sloan !—for not content was he to meet
 Our morning entrance with “ Ha-ha ! Too late ! ”
 But on the playground, ever set he to
 The teasing of poor Minnie, wrapping up
 In laughter one repeated taunt, “ In love !—
 “ In love—oh, fie, for shame ! oh, fie—Bill Shaw
 “ And Minnie Blair ! ” Then Minnie used to slink
 Away and weep, when not in mood to storm
 Or thrash th’ offender, which, to my great joy,
 She sometimes did with yellow “ rag-weeds,” till
 He howled. For Sloan—Bob Sloan, the biggest boy
 In school—was cowardly as a mouse. I could
 Have walked beneath his arm, and yet he feared
 To meet or see me when my face felt warm—
 At least so fancied I, in those, alas,
 Not clearly-visioned days at all ! and hence
 I had a grand contempt for Sloan !

But why

Was Minnie grieved at being told she loved,
 When I felt pride in saying “ Yes, she *does* ! ”
 And I love Minnie Blair ? ” But Minnie used
 To sulk when so I spoke, and straight demand
 The daisies fastened in my cap, and hand
 Me those I had exchanged for her’s ; and so,
 ’Twas pout and pout, with silent walkings home,
 And all to meet, next morn, still fonder near
 The stile !

So passed two summers of my life—

In love with Minnie Blair ; with Bobbie Sloan
 At war. Dunce, coward, mischief-making Sloan !
 Whose greatest joy seemed working others’ woe ;
 And with a smiling face to those you grieved—
 I fancied, then, the world had but yourself
 Could so behave. I’ve no such fancy now !

Ah, well ! we learn at school—at least, while there,
 We’re where our apter fellows learn--much more

Than books contain, or teachers aim to teach ;
For wheresoe'er a dozen children meet,
There lurks a world in miniature—a world
Wherein, through all its tricks and forms, its truths
And falsehoods, loves and hates, is played in smalls
The mighty game of after life ! The years concede
Us no new mental elements ? So he
Who with his A-B-C amount of mind,
Outwitted is by wits of equal age
And lore, may trust to be outwitted through
All time !

We parted—Minnie Blair and I—
When children, both ; my years were ten, and her's,
I think, thirteen. Oh, much and many things
I loved in those bright days ! Is't loved ? I am
In no wise certain that I hated aught—
Not even yon goblin fowl, nor munching wolf—
Nay, not so much as Bobbie Sloan ! But more
Than all things lovely and beloved, I think
I loved wee Minnie Blair. Now, wherefore—say,
Who may, what may or can be love at *ten* ?
Chaotic feelings, strange, unshaped desires,
With just enough of life to chip the shell
Of being ; thence, look forth—exist, without
Or end or aim ! *Ye* say ! *I* answer not !
But, if *ye* ask me *wherefore* did *I* love—
I say, as even our fathers might have said
If questioned *why* they loved the girls they made
Their wives—“*Because I loved*”—*Why*, quite enough !
Eh, well ! *ye* answer, love at *ten* will pass !
Perhaps so ; but *I* did not find it did !
I saw her in the city school, and through
The swinking streets in every kindly look
That met my own ! And, more—for years on years
I shunned to make a female friend who bore
Not some faint trace in figure, hair or eyes,
Of Minnie Blair !

But, time flew on ; and I
Who had become a wealthy friend's best man
Of business, crossed the seas—the wide, wild, blue
Atlantic, though a boy : and went on two
Short hours' advice ; nor ever once allowed
To have what I so much—so often yearned
To have—a peep at yon old home. 'Tis true,
It lay a great way off ; and what was said
May also have been true ; my feelings were
By no means stubborn, so that partings which
Could be avoided, should.

So time went on ;
And still I had my dreams of Minnie Blair !
At last, the dear old walls wherein had rocked
My father's cradle—yea, and grand-dad's too—
Wherein I first had learned that life was sweet
For other sake than self. Eh, well ! Those walls—
God bless them, take me in again !

I've talked
With all the idols of my home—with those
Whose holier claims on one's affection, wave
The need of names. I've seen the cattle—praised
My brother Tom's new plough, and sister Anne's
Young heifer—*larger than a cow!*—and more,
I've helped her to admire the skill and pains
Wherewith she *reared it all herself*. And I,
With something in my throat I cannot name,
And something in my eyes that might be named,
Have eaten off the cake my mother baked
On purpose for my coming. Well—dear hearts !—
I am at home ! I've sat and sipt the cream
Black Moylie gathered up the " Whinny Hill,"
And marvelled, " like a man of judgment," o'er
Black Moylie's parentage. 'Twas told me *how*
And *why* her grand-dam was a sturk the year
I went away, now (who would think it ?) *ten*
Long summers since.

O, simple, loving hearts !

O, nobly unsophisticated souls !
 O, luxury of a mother's love ! Behold,
 I feel, till, if I longer feel that more
 Than merely human beam that floods my soul
 With this excess of light—I know not what !
 From thy dear eyes, *my* mother ! Wheresoe'er
 I turn or look, they flood, and flood my brain,
 Till—till—O, sweetest Saviour ! What must be
 That love of Thine, when thus with this I'm wrapt—
 Wrapt—wrapt !—till all my being seems a-blaze !
 Dear Heaven ! I've borne ! I bear ! But—but—no more !

I sit within a little room that holds
 A little couch—a little case of drawers :
 I see my satchel on a pin above ;
 And yonder hangs my hoop ; and, near the same,
 My last new kite's old skeleton ! They speak
 Not ; but they're wondrous eloquent of *look* !
 Sweet things ! what long—what loving tales they tell
So stilly ! Ah, if found they even speech,
 Methinks 'twould touch me less ! I turn me towards
 The drawers—I find a top and marbles. Ha !
 What's this ? A little parched-up bunch—a bunch
 Of *what* ? I see ! 'Twas daisies, once, with sprigs—
 Of *something* ! Southernwood or thyme ! I kiss
 The trifle, but its scent is gone. Ah, well,
'Twas there ! but, hush ! I hear my sister's voice :
 “ She comes—look out ! ”

“ Who comes ? ”

“ Why, Minnie Blair ! ”

Then, through that dainty gable window, next
 The sky, once more I leant me as of old ;
 And while I drew the ivy round my brow,
 To see, unseen, she floated up the hill,
 Without a limb in motion, more, it seemed,
 Than has the tall white wave of morning mist
 That scales the mountain side. Ah, Minnie Blair
 Looked very lovely !

So we've met again,
This Minnie Blair and I—I, with a halt
And school-boy's flutter on my tongue, and she,
With how she'd heard of my arrival—how
She'd never stayed to dress—and, here, she glanced
Adown her worsted robe ; and I, on *such*
A form !

'Twere vain to talk of what we've seen !
I've read your bards on human beauty—seen
The paintings of your noblest schools ; but, while
I could have worshipped whence such beauties rose,
Did I not feel and know that they, like those
Sweet scents compounded from a thousand flowers,
Were, also, things *compound*—each, but of such
Lone lights as, caught from beauty manifold,
By some deep-seeing and retentive eye,
Become, beneath the all-obedient hand,
A glorious *one* ! On such, the world bestows
That wonder-waking word, "Creation"! What,
Deserving grander name than "Grand compound,"
Can be creation of the *finite* mind ?
If not such glorious composition, then
The fairest thing depicting human flesh
Is but a *copy*, cold and dead, of some
Fair, living form and face. But, here behold,
In this sweet Minnie Blair—this lifeful girl—
Is more of all the eye admires than song
Or canvas ever told !

No artist, I,

With cunning words, to show the subtle lights
And shades, which, changing with each turn, filled all
The May-day glory of her hair. I can
But say the cloud of curls, on either side
Her brow of blue-veined pearl, was yellow, dashed,
At turns, with darkest gold ; and that their wreaths,
Like those fair flakes that sometimes veil the moon,
Received a radiance from the face that beamed
Between. Yet Minnie's was no *rosy* face.

Albeit on either cheek, there died away—
Away to *nothing*, through the general white—
A faint—faint tinge of curious red—so faint,
And yet so clear, ye might have said such cheek
Was breathed on by the lips whose kisses stain
The roses—breathed on, only, free from all
The depth of more material touch. Her eyes,
Ye know, were blue, as said before ; but then
Ye could not know, nor I, till met we, thus,
How very small a part was *hue* of their
Exceeding beauty ! *Wells* of *feeling*, deep
And bright, were they, wherein the living soul
Was almost visible to sense ; but, oh,
With such a strangely-seeming depth, a grand
Extent of blue and mystic-looking space,
Or *distance*, stretching in—of space that flashed
As strangely bright, or, deep'ning, darked through all
Its wondrous blue, with every fitful gush
Of light, or graver thought that flitted o'er
Her brain, to rush in music from her lips—
Ah, Minnie Blair was very lovely !

“ How,”

She said, “ how much I've longed to see that face !
But, then, you don't remember, gentle sir,
That we were lovers long ago !”

And then

She smote my brain with silvery laughter till
I reeled ; for, lo ! I thought it strange, which was
Not strange—her laughter and her words, 'twas clear,
Had *equal meaning*—none beyond their mirth !
I could not bear her lightness on a theme
That deepened, widened strangely in my heart,
With every lifting of her lids. She saw,
Or seemed to see—I may not think of all
She must have seen in *my* sheep's face !—some chord
Undreamt of had been struck, and by her hand,
That yielded me unpleasant melody ;
But could it be, in aught she saw, her eye

Had seen aright ? I could not guess ! she sat
A moment grave, or seeming as if struck
With wonder. Then she rallied—talked of things
I had forgotten ; but of none that I
Remembered—oh, how well ! She changed her tone,
And talked of what I had become—so tall !
And really, she *must* say it, handsome ! more
Than all, in *business*, prospering every day !

I dare not say it did not yield me joy,
To hear that songful tongue grow eloquent
On my advance ; nor dare I now, though old,
Peer too minutely through the misty past,
For flowers of feeling, whose flush brightness, then,
Not all the sturdy strain of *youth* had power
To keep from giving colour to my brow
And cheek. The leaves are seared ; but, ah, the roots
Are threaded through my heart—my *life* ! And old,
Indeed, must be the heart whose feelings can
Afford to toy amidst its earlier hopes,
Or, from the dust of its affections, slain
In youth, erect word-trifles for the eye
Or ear !

We talked, this Minnie Blair and I ;
And changed our matters of discourse as much
Like babes as ever. Talking so, we talked
Of books ; but, lo, on this large theme how far
Sweet Minnie rose o'er me ! Her words alone
Were pictures ; and her thoughts, when uttered,
Rang and shone, as 'twere, like iron facts enclosed
In golden fancies. Need I blush to say
I brightened in her brightness ? Ay I looked,
What I was slow to feel, a *man* !—a man,
But one whose heart was still a *babe's* !

I asked
Of Harry's stile ; then, carelessly enough,
Of Bobbie Sloan. Her low, light laugh was cleft
Asunder by the name. One half still played
Within my ear ; the other, quivering through

Her neck, o'erspread its snow with scarlet light !
She felt the sickening glory's sudden flush,
And sought to veil its lustre, or its cause,
By laughter that refused her will, or came
As half ashamed. But that *strong* will, at length,
Rose victor o'er her heart where I, I saw,
Had struck a chord, indeed !

" Oh, Bobbie Sloan !—

Why, Bob, of course, has grown a man. We thought,
You know, that Bob would have been tall—*how tall*,
His earlier friends were half-afraid to think !
But, no ; he stopt—stopt short, they say, of even
The common height—and yet, Bob Sloan *is great !*"

And then she laughed—a sort of school-girl's laugh,
And suddenly became ashamed. In fine,
Because *she showed*, I saw it all !

And so,
This idle dunce—this impish Bobbie Sloan,
I almost said aloud, has won the heart
Of such a queen, by nature, as this here !
Well—shall he keep it ? That's for me to say !





M I N N I E B L A I R .

PART II.

O, SUMMERS—royal Summers, long, long passed,
But still too well remembered!—ye that once
In perfumed gold and purple, fleeing, seemed
As 'twere a train of tripping Eastern queens
Who each behind her drew, with charmer's song
And gleeful jest, and smiles that sunned the way,
Th' enamoured Winter, like an Ethiop Prince—
His darker visage sparkling into light,
That almost seemed her own, so brightly burst,
Beneath his tread, some seedling gem of thought
Or deed, still lovelier for the reckless waste
Wherewith it had been shed; but lovelier still,
For that, through every change, the thing had been
By young Imagination nursed to flower
Of *holier* feeling—touched, how oft, with tears!—
In memory's grateful soil. Ah, false, false suns!
Ah, false, false summers of our earlier life—
Whose sunniest touch so seared—consumed—destroyed!—
When thus, the power and will, have ye to blast
A beauty rarer than their moves amidst
The stars—to blight a bloom of roses such
As ne'er, perhaps, ye nursed—not even amongst
The bowers of Eden, wherefore is't that when
Your all-deceiving suns, on bright young brows
Have changed the floating gold to silver, thin
And lifeless—when amongst the thick, dark locks,

Of *some*, whose blackest midnight did, for years,
But deepen in your glare—ah, when in those,
Your moonlit dews have crisped to cold, fixed frosts,
Why make ye not our *spirits* white as well ?
Or, if ye do, why, through your bleaching beams,
Must, thus, poor weeping memory ever lead
Our sighing souls to view the sickening stains ?

'Twas in the moon of love—the month of song
And flowers—the minstrel's idol !—beauteous May,
When I, in converse with my conscious soul,
The dewy distance 'twixt my dear old home
And that of Minnie Blair, wore silently
Away. My fancy had been fed with flowers,
Throughout the day—with flowers of nobler mind
Than I had much consorted with beyond
My books ; hence I, though gloomy, felt a power
Around, partaking somewhat of the light
Just left—the peerless light of Minnie Blair !
I walked a dreaming walk, but what I dreamt
I know not now—perhaps did, scarcely, then !

The eve, in kirtle grey, and vest of blue
And crimson, stole upon the drowsing heavens—
Her breath of perfume showering pearly food,
Like manna, 'mongst the camping flowers, and all
Through such a dearth of sound, that from the scrog,
The hazel scrog of old bird-nesting days,
Far down by Harry's well, the throstle's psalm
Rolled up the glen, as if, like rolling snow,
It gathered volume on its way, till through
The fine blue veins of space that tremblingly
Received, the sweet sounds circled like the blood
Of life, changed to melodious voice.

The eve

With me was still a mournful point of time !
Wild thoughts cowered down, or, like the birds, beneath
Its graver light retired. My soul put off
The outward man, or, from the sobered lights,
Or semi-glooms, caught feelings purer—gleams

Of deeper vision—power to *feel*, as 'twere,
 What all *may* feel, but none *may* comprehend—
 Our own relationship with time and space
 With all that is—that was—that evermore
 Shall be ! 'Twas often at such times, my wont
 To take the day in hand, and, with an eye
 Of microscopic cunning, con its hours
 And moments o'er, and sigh or smile as word
 Or deed throughout had left me cause.
 That eve, alas !—and yet, 'tis not the eve,
 Retributory, as it was, that should
 Be mourned, so much as that sad day which makes
 Its close so well remembered.

Bear, oh bear

With one whose griefs, perhaps, still more than weight
 Of years—yet, years *not* few—may make him weak
 And garrulous !

This consciousness ! Doth she

At times, a double work perform—a work
 For present thought, whereof she wots, and one
 For recollection, worked unconsciously ?
 Howe'er it be, I know that on that eve
 I took no note of outward things—no note
 Of beauties here or there ; but know as well
 My recollection teems with sights, and sounds,
 And odours, gathered from the lea, which must
 Have come by consciousness unconsciously !

I see to-night more clearly far than then,
 The hill and vale, so green and sea-like, sparked
 With daisies, as I've seen the big green sea,
 With dots of foam, before the tempest dashed
 Abroad, in songful glory. Through the hours
 Of bolder beam, the poor old labouring earth
 Had sweat, 'twould seem, unduly. Hence, it was
 That those in crimson vest, with cooler veins,
 Through whom the dying, and repentant sun
 Gives back earth's stolen fatness, had a wealth
 Of watery pearls unusual for the wold—

A wealth that bathed me ankle deep, and gave
 My after ail a suppositional tinge
 To suit the colour of my case, for eyes
 That might not see me through and through.

Alas !

My recollection, fleeing, as a bird
 That seeks the rest may ne'er be found, if she
 For even as 'twere a pause to breathe, alights
 Upon the close of that frail day, or day
 Of frailty, 'tis as if a foot were seared—
 As if their hours, so calmly, brightly winged
 By Heaven with love and peace and joy, were each
 Of iron, heated seven times, so sick
 Becomes my heart—my head—my all ;
 Ay, till the brain that pulses, even now,
 Like some young startled virgin's breast, beneath
 Its fragmentary snows, could rave
 Of childish fancies, as it raved so long—
 Beginning, shortly from that eve's decline !

How clear, even now, I see the sparks of gold
 Or blue, or crimson, or the whole combined,
 That gleamed through every bead of dew that lamped
 The grassy blade it bowed ! I see—alas !
 What see I not ?—all things that round me were,
 From yonder tiny, pale, or tinted pearl
 That trembled or dissolved, as if beneath
 My glance, to yonder big round sun that, like
 The eye of God, peered through the shivering green
 Of beech and sycamore, till each grim thought,
 Within my soul, grew fairer in its light,
 Or from the fiery presence skulked away,
 And left me human still ! O, blessed sun !
 O, blessed glory of that hour ! with what
 A purifying flame, for me, you smote
 Yon dear old gable-window, whence so oft
 I watched for some that none needs watch
 For now !

Ah, yes, 'tis strange, my spirit seemed

To be that eve a two-fold thing ! I saw—
 What saw I not ? And yet I saw to *know*,
 But Bobbie Sloan ! I felt—what felt I not ?
 One feeling in the end : that I had *wronged*
 The lad, and *tried to wrong* the man !

That day

From morn with Bob and Minnie I had spent,
 As was my wont—for many days had so
 Been passed since my return ; and I had learned,
 Full scon—and learned with feelings, far from such
 As honest soul *should* feel—how much beneath
 Compare was I to him, in all that charms
 The eye of man or *woman*—all that meets
 The calmer sense of deeper-seeing soul,
 Or wins the homage of a tuneful ear !

His form was manly—scarce so tall as mine,
 But cast in nobler mould ; and in his face
 Such simple dignity of soul as turns
 One's reverence into love, and yet without
 That reverence wearing less. I never looked
 On fairer form of man ! Throughout 'twas built
 Like something meant to show how SHE who built
 Could build. Then, such a wealth of fancy ! Why,
 His every thought—like some old tapestry
 When fairly opened out, and shaken, fold
 From fold—a living landscape seemed, that shone
 With strange, bright flowers and grand seraphic forms,
 And divers abstract goods that moved like gods
 Of old, at war with vice and wrong. Again,
 Those thoughts that flashed and flew, on feelings born,
 As 'twere, of light and vigour, as on wings,
 Out-gushed, at times, in *music*—nature's own !—
 Yea, nature's noblest, sweetest song ! and then
 So artless—*honest* ! ah, he could have been
 No other ! feelings when they rush, as his,
 Hot from the heart, demanding *instant* form
 And dress, give heads no *time* to shape disguise !

'Twas true, sweet Minnie—peerless Minnie Blair,

'Twas true of thee to say, "and yet, Bob Sloan
 Is great!" he was; and I, with all my faults,
 Was not perverse or false, or vile enough
 To sneer his greatness *all* away, although
 It pained me granting what I did; and oft
 In presence of the one we both so loved,
 I tried to grieve him with my heartless—

"Pshaw!"

Thy flowers of Fancy are but scentless things;
 And 'mongst such honest thoughts as look some more
 To meaning than to sound, or pretty tints,
 Are seldom worth their room!"

Some truth, no doubt,
 Lurked in the taunt; but not for sake of *truth*
 I said it then, my heart was stung! The dream
 Of all my days had donned a death's head stare
 From this Bob Sloan's deserts!

My soul, thank thou
 The surely special grace, that I no worse—
 No darklier looked on *my* exceeding loss
 Or his *vast* gain; for, lost to *me* I felt
 She surely was! That night, beside my couch,
 By yon old gable-window, ivy-screened,
 The agonizing truth became more clear!

That eve, about our parting, with a look
 Half love and half reproach—a mother's look
 Upon a wayward boy, much more it seemed
 Than maiden's on a man, in years so near
 Her equal—Minnie slipt within my hand
 A folded letter, goodly sized, and said—

"For sake of those old school-time loves of ours
 Read what, in *love*, I've writ, but *not* just now,
 Nor till you're home and all alone, and have
 The light thereon, made purer by its own
 Decline, and by yon filtering ivy round
 The dear old gable-window, as of old. I trust"—

She said, and smiled her thoughtful smile,
 "That it

May give you more of really *seasonal sweets*
Than yonder bunch of withered daisies, mixed
With southernwood and thyme has yielded me!"

Rebuke, I felt, was in the jest—deserved,
No doubt ; for I had tried to pain the man
She loved ; and in the gift, whereof she spoke,
Was ?—Well, was *folly*, doubtless ! such, howe'er,
As might, I thought, have called for *pity* more
Than *blame*, at least from Minnie Blair ; she *was*
So gentle—gentle ? Ah, but *wise* as well !
Hence, like a skilful surgeon with a wound,
Whose deadly nature needs the firmer hand,
She smote at once upon the *canker*, though
She mourned the *cause*—the weakness shewn ; for I
The withered trifles found within my desk
Had brought to prove what *my* child's heart had been,
And hint, as well, of what was still the man's !

O, Minnie, Minnie—strangest Minnie Blair !
Was that of thine no *woman's heart* ? Hadst thou
No dainty little vanities that craved
To feed on lover's looks, or on the *fame*
Of being *mighty* in the world of *hearts* ?
Hadst thou—but no ! O, Minnie, Minnie Blair !
Nor wile, nor guile, nor vanity hadst thou !
Such baneful fruit as grows from lack of thought—
From lack of heart, or *worse*, its sister bane,
The big world's *sickly virtue*, cast no streak
Of shadow where *you* walked ! 'Twas hence ! the hope
She could not *bless*, she scorned to keep alive !

I read her letter, as desired, "alone!"
It dealt, in her peculiar way, with what
From me had been a *snarl*, or three short words
In answer to a friendly line, wherein
She asked,

"What think you, now, of our old friend—
Or *foe*!—and schoolmate, Bobbie Sloan ?"

"He's mad!"

I wrote, and signed my name, and sent the sheet,

With those three words, like blots, upon its blank—
Three carrion birds, that, on a field of snow,
Croaked for my doom !

She wrote :—

“ I give thee thanks,
Friend Will, for thy *small* letter, just received ;
And hereby crave, for our old friendship’s sake,
The privilege of waxing somewhat grand—
Of making one, Miss Minnie Blair, to look
As she had been a mighty traveller, like
Yourself—if not o’er sea and land, as you,
At least, o’er ink and paper, where ’twould seem
You don’t feel quite at home ; or, possibly,
Your *larger seeings* make old friends look *small* !

O, thou, our travelled—more, our lynx-eyed friend,
Whose *deeply-business* days and works have made
Him, *all*, it doth appear, so verily
An *eye*, that hearts, themselves, and all therein,
Are seen, and measured at a glance—so goes
The gossip’s tales !—so also saith, amongst
Us, pur-blind rustics, thine own manner, friend !
So strangely prompt, at times, thou seemest to seize
The mere *complexion* of events, and thence,
Erect opinions, bowing down thereto,
As unto things—not tints or shadows !—hewn
From out the eternal adamant of Truth ;
Take note, dear friend, few, in this world of ours
Are quite the lynx-eyed creatures some suppose ;
Nor yet, by any means, quite fit to judge
Or reason, rightly, on the sudden spur
Of moments harnessed for—they tell not *what* !

I grant to some a quickness to observe ;
But must demur to such, as proving power
To penetrate—to *always* see the *root*
Or more, too oft, than flower, or leaf, or *rind*,
Alone !

But men, thou sayest, have *brain* as well
As *eyes*. Suppose it so ! ‘Tis true, those eyes,

Whose food is light, therewith receive our acts
Whereof the brain must be the judge, which brain,
A prisoned creature, needs must take its views
At secondhand, and con them in the *dark*!
Hence are effects perceived while yet their cause
Is hid; but, mark! the *quickest* eye is oft
The most *deceitful* in its work—and, more,
Is oft companion to the slowest brain—
While eyes that see but slowly, granting time
For what is seen to be digested, oft
Transmit, 'twould seem, effect and cause at once!

Such eyes, I fancy, grow in time more fond
Of fountains than of streams, and find delight,
And even *truth*, thereafter less in *things*
Than *principles*. The aggregate of brain,
I grant thee, mostly judgeth right at last;
But then, to know its vision final, one
Must wait, perhaps, a hundred years—ay, more!

Thou sneerest, methinks—do so! 'Tis true I dream
As yet, but at the outer gate of life,
And feel, with certain tremblings of the heart,
How swift the stubborn moments thrust me in
To know the worst! Yet I could give thee, friend,
A world of proof, illustrated by faults
Of vision all my own! Well—smile away!
I'm but a *girl*. What's that? A conscious point,
Or fragment, of our great world's self! What then?
Why, this: I, as a *girl*, have learned how oft
Some act—some solitary act, that stands
As lone, as *prominent*, in some long life,
Declaring good or ill, may make the man,
By public voice, an angel, or far else.
'Tis wrong! No *single* act, however grand
Or base, can tell the tenor of a life—
The tone and disposition of a mind!
The veriest wretch may do a noble deed,
And win the crown of our applause—whose best,
How'er, is not unchanging! So, again,

The noblest heart that ever throbbed
May have its frailer pulsings—yea, permit
Some treacherous time, or place, or circumstance,
To play the traitor with its hopes, and steal
The general brightness from else honoured name !

'Tis impulse, *not* premeditation, gives
The real man. This tells what NATURE did ;
That, but what ART has done. Hence, I, to see
My Friend aright, prefer to hurry o'er
His *large, lone* acts, and, looking but to such
Small thoughts and deeds—*too small* for *general* note—
As shoot, like sparks, from out the reckless fire
Of his scarce conscious will, peruse the man
In *smalls*. No disposition, here, 'mongst men,
If conned with care, would sink or soar beyond
The human medium much. The meanest wretch,
However mean or vile, is human still !
The germs of good and evil are, I hold,
As such, alike in all—quite *one in kind*
Though differing in *degree*. *My* evil may
Be larger, friend, than thine ; but in itself
The thing is just *the same*—not any worse !

Or if thou wilt, though both alike in *bulk*,
And in *degree* of ill, there is a power
Within which one may have, another want—
A might that can control the exercise
Of evil, though such evil grow no less,
Such *might* may simply be corporeal—
Nothing more !—nothing more than larger growth
Of bone and muscle ! ah, believe me, oft
Our moral worths or wants arise from but
The poor unconscious flesh alone ! How oft
The sickly texture of a spinal chord,
Or nerves too silken for life's drugget work,
Should bear the blame of vacillating heart,
Or hand, or voice—of faults, defaulter's self
May blame the first, and loathe the very most !
Why, even some grand disturber of our peace—

A nation's peace!—may lodge, unseen, within
The green right side of him, on whose poor head
We pour our wrath, and swing the weight of all!

Oh! could we only see *within* the shell,
Before we praise or blame its outer shape,
Or markings in the sand, our praise might change
To blame—our blame to pity, till our tears,
While kindly medicating where they fall,
Might bless, for aye, not *one* but *many* souls!

For me, may He, I pray, from whom has come
My *all* of good, vouchsafe to grant me eyes
Which, when they look within, more narrowly
May scan—which, when they look without, may serve
A heart and tongue of Charity!

Again,
My thanks for thy *small* letter!

Let me add,
'Tis *short* for one who lived so *long*, nor yet
Is dead in *my* esteem. Some might regret
Such brevity! *Not* I; for that I know
How oft the beauty of a *truth*, like that
Of *wit* is heightened by its shortness. Such,
Perhaps, is always so when truth goes down
A little sourish. Hence, kind sir, my thanks,
Again, for such kind sparing of your friends
And *ink*!

But, seriously, dear Willie, I,
From one so travelled, did expect to have
A something new—at least, some newer than
The fact that Bob is *mad*. I never nursed
A doubt thereof! Is't *mad*? And, wherefore not?
All men, I hold, are *mad*, or more or less,
Each taking from the common ill, a form—
As shapen by his idiosyncrasy—
Peculiar to himself, as different trees
Take different tints from Autumn which is *one*!
The tone and colour of the mind, as those,
In each, have been determined by the parts

Material, bulk and quality, and mould,
 Or manner of arrangement, making all
 The difference in degree, duration—yea,
 In all that makes the malady appear,
 In different men, so oft, a different form
 Of ail. Whatever striking on the stream
 Of thought or feeling, starts one tiny wave
 From out the regular ripple of its course,
 Or adds to Reason's general pulse, beyond
 Its sum of seventy strokes per minute, such
 Produces madness—temporary, though
 It be, it still is madness. Therefore, love,
 Or hate, or grief, or *joy*—for where is he
 Who *reasons* while he *really laughs*?—is each
 A kin to that which, irresponsibly,
 Destroys the breathing frame-work of a soul!

Heigh-ho ! Then *love* is only madness—good !
 Is't new ? Go ask old Plato !

Thou, as well
 As Bob, hast written verses—doubtless fine,
 For Bob admires them, whilst thou sneerest at his !

But let me warn thee, friend : there is a class
 Of Bardic auditors can tolerate
 And praise such cobweb stuff as they, themselves,
 Feel able to surpass ; whilst that which soars
 Away beyond their lowlier powers, they load
 With reprobation ! Be not thou of those !

This man, to whom I've given my heart—to whom
 I've promised more—my *hand*!—is not the dull
 Insensate thing thy manner towards him saith
 Thou dost believe ! But He who gave him heart
 To feel, as *few* can feel, hath given him, too,
 Such power to *bear* and to *forbear*, beneath
 A wrong, as *few* can know, and *fewer* still
 Appreciate ! His soul is girt about
 With strength as with a robe—with gentleness,
 As with an atmosphere—now playful, light
 And thoughtless as the breeze that scarcely stirs

One holy curl on his big brow—and now,
As earnest as a storm ! This more, he loves
His mother—oh, how well !—is, therefore, sure
To deeply love his wife !

Dear friend, be still
Our friend ! Permit us still to love as once
We loved each other !

THOU hast higher work
Than these poor fields afford, and in due time
Must meet it. Meet it, like yourself, or like
A man that feels that 'tis not *what* he does,
So much as *why* and *how* 'tis done, creates
The right to gratitude or scorn. Farewell !—
If we as friends can meet henceforth, then grant
That we be seldom long apart ! Yet I,
If such as I might dare to counsel such
As thou, would solemnly advise to mix
Less *yeast* with thy esteems. Believe me, sir,
The friendship of *immoderate* warmth is not
The closest keeper of a friend. To be
Too fond—confiding over much, or till
Your friend's a sort of second self—may lose
You whom you love, or win but his contempt !

This world has many hearts could prop my words :
'Tis *sad*, but *true*—a way the world has got—
We cannot mend it. Let us mend *ourselves* !

Meanwhile be we as ever, be we friends !
If not, as strangers, let us live and die
Wishing each other well—if but for sake
Of *self*!—as when we pray, “Thy kingdom come !”

Account me, Will, though seasoned somewhat, still
Unchanged, and,

As of old,

Your

MINNIE BLAIR.”

Unchanged!—and as of *old*—a guard—a guide ?
And nothing more !

I see it all ! O, heart !—

*My heart!—how thou hast fooled thee!—fooled my life!—
My soul, herself! and all that, holiest, rose
Therein! O, silliest—silliest *child!* But still,
More silly—yea, more childish *man!* Alas!
Yet what am I, that I should blame—blame whom?
My heart!—my soul!—my silly, silly self,
Alone! O, dearest Minnie, Minnie Blair!
O, wondrous woman!—beautiful as *true*,
And *true* as beautiful art thou!*

Sweet Heaven;

Her love for me was such as *noble hearts*
Have ever shown for *weaker things!* And *mine?*—
Oh, love's a poor logician!—question not
Its what or wherefore! It was *mine*—and I!—
O, Bobbie Sloan! O, Minnie, Minnie Blair!

My brain felt hot to madness; yet I sat
Me still by yon old gable-window, like—
Ah, who shall tell me what! Oh, who shall tell
Me what I said or did throughout that night
Of mental, moral gloom! Oh, who can dream
Of what the morn disclosed to eyes that loved
So well, the son's—the brother's smile to meet!





M I N N I E B L A I R .

PART III.

Oh, ye pure spirits of the once so loved,
Who, in your whiteness glorified, now walk
Beyond the stars, to you my soul looks forth—
Along the moonlight of her dreams, for some
Sweet throbings of those chords, where thought meets
thought,
Within the CENTRAL MIND, spreading, from pole
To pole, pulsations of the infinite,
And, through our visions, signs of things to be—
That so, my inner consciousness may take,
Albeit unconsciously from you, some tinge
Of thought or feeling.

I've a tale to tell,
And much require to meet some fairy where,
Of old, we used to watch her at the well,
Clothing the naked words of her, from whose
Grimed hand she drank, with such a blaze of gems
As won sweet speeches from a bitter tongue ;
For mine are plain, nude truths, unmeet to shew
Amongst their ornate kin, which, marshalled by
Some Nature's-own-anointed, don the gold
And purple of imperial mind—put on
And in, at artist Fancy's touch, such soul
As trembles into tears or laughter while
We gaze. Ah, that ecstatic vision !

Well !—

We've all our dreams—whence *are* they ? Whence are *we*,
No greater mystery than our dreams ? All have,

I hold, as we, their roots in that UNSEEN
Where the Eternal pulseth life through worlds
And systems, even as mine along these veins—
In that unseen whereto no earthly light
Nor heavenly, yet vouchsafed, can lead beyond
The dream itself. Yet still we strain and strain,
And *think* we feel a somewhat in the dark,
Till, straining on, like one a-tiptoe, lo !
We stumble. Let us even keep to earth—
We walk not steadily even there !

Behold,

I had a dream, if *dreaming* still, breathe o'er
The electric lines that pass from heart to heart—
From world to world !—that loveliness of soul
Whose light can make earth's plainest faces fair—
Can round our darkest shadows into suns !

What more I might enumerate of gifts
And graces, *here* no more, I shall forbear
To individualise; but even invoke
In aggregate the whole !

We smile to-day

At *invocations*. Ah, the bards of Greece,
The old, know better ! Thus, with them, whene'er
A certain list of attributes would suit
The subject of their song, they turned their eyes
To some abstraction, holding in itself
Abstractions of the goods or ills required,
And, studying there, gave closer portraitures.

For me, I hold that writing, even a line
To one we love, if written by the light
Of some remembered smile, such line will read
By so much smile the better !

Ah, my soul !

Not all the clouds of unpropitious skies,
However dense and dark—and many have
They been !—not all the blinding bustle, born
Of anxious strivings, through the city's din
To still the cry of daily needs, could yield

Thee power to shut away, from memory's eye,
The faintest smile on one sweet face of yore !—
A face, the fount of all the *real* grief—
The *grief*?—yea, all the *joy* as well, that thou,
My soul, hast ever known !

'Twas while I dreamt—
Yea, lay and dreamt, a moral, mental wreck—
For two long moons, and *raved* of what I dreamt,
That intervals there were, when, pale and bright,
There flashed along the darkness of my dream
A brief, swift gleam, as through some midnight cloud
A sudden flash of moonlight we've beheld—
A *flash*, no more, till all our world was dark
Again !

O, Minnie, Minnie, self-accused !—
O, nursing angel, gentlest Minnie Blair !
'Twas thy sweet smile, while knelt thou by my couch,
A silent, watching solace, day and night,
That welcomed so each brief return of mine
To seeming consciousness ! And when the film
Of ail from my crazed eyes had passed, and mind—
No more the wedding-tent of frenzied whims
And maddened fancies—oped its folded doors,
And pressed these feet to movements round my couch,
How oft—ah, me !—I've wiled unwilling limbs
To bear me where I loved to sit and *watch*,
Through yon old gable-window—not, ah, me !
The glory of the western heavens when all
Their tender blue was streaked with curdled gold !
Ah, no ! Nor yet to watch how fast the cloud
Of mingled white became a thing so like,
Perhaps the Fiery Pillar—black as doom
On Egypt's side ; on Israel's, the light—
The guiding glory of the Lord of Hosts !
Ah ! no ; 'twas not to frame such fancies, then,
I waited so, and watched, while round my brow
Yon draping ivy sheathed itself in flame,
Or rose on every breath of bolder air,

A living cloud of deepest green, besparked
With trembling fires, like some bright seraph's wing
Made sentinel to shield my spirit's calm !
Oh, not for those or these, though doubtless came
And went such guileless fancies, sat I so !—
Or morn or eve, I did but watch and wait
To see the dear, enquiring angel top
Our little hill, as was her wont, to learn
The progress of my state !

Oh, how I've hung
Upon the dawn of that shy, upward glance
And smile, towards where she knew her patient sat !

Behold ! I see her, as she *sails*, or glides,
Up-up, before me, *now*, as *then*—up-up
The little pebbly path, that neatly fringed
With boxwood, winds its chalky length, along
The bright green slope—I see her as she *sails*—
For, even her step has superhuman grace !—
I see her bent to pick a panzy from
The clump—perhaps, a daisy here or there ;
And yet, 'tis with a dreaming hand that hints,
Or *seems* to say her thoughts are otherwhere—
Perhaps, still self-accusing o'er my ail !
And now I see her—suddenly—*herself*,
But still as half-ashamed—look up, and lo !
That face—that smile, replying to my own :
It shines as might some eastern window, whence
A soul, made perfect, or escaped from flesh,
Looks forth, with all the orient blaze of morn
Upon its joy !

Alas ! how soon did all
So heaven-like shine with different light—the light,
It seemed to me, of sorrow—even, at times,
Of tears !

A few brief weeks so passed ; and then
That face illumed our slim, white-pebbled path
No more !

But strength returning, I at length

Began to move once more amongst the days ;
And list the tinkle which, so all-subdued,
Stole, now-and-then, along the hours—at times
In sudden sob, or sigh, that made me start,
And stare on my sweet sister's face ; at times,
Again, that mystic music spoke in words
Half mangled—single words that would not link
Together, but expired without, for me,
One note of meaning, though the whisperer's lips
Grew oft both fixed and pale beneath the weight
Or import of the sounds. My mother's ear,
Too, seemed to sicken, or refuse to list
Some airs the gossips breathed—the whole concealed
Most studiously from me.

Lo ! suddenly,
Along the country-side bursts forth a tale,
At first in wail, half indistinct, far o'er
The slumberous air, like distant hum and buzz
Of migratory bees ; but soon in sharp,
Shrill cry, as when a night of sable frosts
Some sharp wind pierceth—then, in sounds that shook
The hills, as 'twere the voice in some lone dell
Of mountain cataract : “ Poor Minnie Blair !—
Poor Minnie Blair !—She's gone ! but where, who knows ?”

Then explanations, thick and fast, came down
Upon each other—this, to fragments dashed ;
And that, to foam by each arrival new !
But, as the country's tears grew dry, the eyes
And ears of general understanding saw
And heard with more of Reason, till, at length
The voice of Vague Report was hushed by truth—
Yea, truth too rugged for the ear to take,
Even yet, might one suppose, without some wince
Incredulous !

O, Minnie, Minnie Blair !
And can it be, that thou wast so deceived ?
Too true—alas, too true for thee ! With all
Thy white robed retinue of white souled maids

Attendant, thou thyself a very moon
Amongst those stars, one morn didst stand within
The village church, a bride—a bride ; but one,
Alas ! whose eyes soon lost their peerless light
In rainy mists ; for there thou stood, a bride—
A shrinking, cowering, *fainting* bride, without
The bridegroom !

Bobbie Sloan came not !

Too true,
How much too true, for thee, was that of thine
To me ?

“ This more : he loves his mother—oh,
How well ! ”

’Twas even as thou saidst ! But, ah !
When loving her *so well*, why dared he e'er
Ambition such a love as she, he knew,
Had fixed her selfish soul against ? Weak man,
And weak—oh, how much weaker mother—she
Who saw in human hearts but gold, or dross,
And weighed them by the weight of whatso' coin
Of proper currency they seemed to bear !

This Wilhelmina Frond, a city maid
Hath won the highest niche in thy esteem,
Poor weakling Widow Sloan ! And, having seen,
For many years, the big world's easy ways
Of winning note and admiration, when
The means, employed, their shadows lose within
The light of ends expected, she, the free
Miss Frond, with some ten thousand pounds, to tell,
And all the *proved* artillery of her arts,
Besieged the widow for the widow's son,
And won the widow's heart, before the cause
Of siege had waked suspicion. Well, in truth,
The maid was fair ! The coinage of her brain,
Besides, so readily took to words, and had
A glitter which, for *unread* eyes, looked more
Like gold than much of Minnie Blair's, whose wealth

Of mind lay less in tinselled verbiage than
In depth of diamond thought—whose wealth, 'twas known,
In other form, were beauty, head and heart !

This Wilhelmina, as I've said, was not
A thing had grown amongst the violets,
Or sighed to learn the secrets of their scents,
Or yet to imitate their down-cast brow,
Or modest bearing ; but had prouder sprung
From city parentage. Her father had,
In prosperous times, so plied an honest trade,
In goods so needful to the crowd, as ham
And butter, eggs and cheese, and sundry such,
That ere his sun had crossed the line of years
He found himself possessed of means to lead
A country life, in ease, 'mongst fruit and flowers.

His only child, the maiden named, could sing—
Which means she had been taught—could play at cards,
Had tried her hand at *hearts*, but not amongst
The nobler, some averred, with much success,
Though scarce a spot, to FILCH-HEART sacred, knew
Not of her name.

This Bobbie Sloan, the bard,
She *may* have really loved for his true self,
Alone. Queer things, 'tis said, are possible
At times ; but 'twas the general voice, she loved
The light his wondrous gifts had gathered round
His name, much more than him—her one grand aim
Still being, as 'twas said, where'er she stood
To stand and shine—the central point that drew,
By *any* means, distinction and applause !
One thing, at least, was passing clear, she loathed
Poor Minnie Blair ! and, holding now, within
Her practised hand, the key to that weak heart
Of Widow Sloan, she used it, as her love,
Or loathing, led the hour. But, Widow Sloan,
Before her widow's woes had magnified
Her seeming future's wants to bulk so much
Beyond all reason, had herself been such

As only could a mother be to such
 A son. A mental eye that pierced beneath
 All surfaces—a mind that seemed a fount
 Of thoughts that only wait the form of words
 To be immortal as our speech, had been,
 'Twas said by birth-right, those of Widow Sloan.

Ah, this despairing of the good God's hand,
 In loving guidance and protection, brings
 A weight of woes so much like madness that
 Did Heaven not will, in such dark case to make
 The night be parent to the day, the end
 Might be a black, black night, indeed !

So froze

Or flowed the current of affairs, when she,
 The free Miss Frond, assumed o'er Widow Sloan
 And Bobbie's fate the reins of rule. She closed,
 Within a mother's bann, his visits to the Blairs—
 He may not go but now and then ; and, when
 Permitted, but to save appearances !

Alas, what marvel Minnie's eyes, so oft,
 As rounded she our little hill, met mine
 As if she wept or *had* been weeping ! So
 Went matters on, till Bobbie sickened—till,
 His life despaired of, forced the crazed

“I yield—

His promise *shall* be kept !”

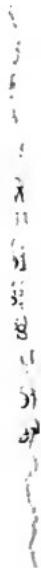
Too truly proved,
 The wedding morn—that *was* to be !—how *crazed*,
 Indeed, that same consent had been. The morn
 'Rose brightly—'rose and shone, as if the heavens
 Rejoiced as *once* on One who rolled away
 The stone, and sat thereon, where Mary wept
 Before the sepulchre ! ah, dawns there o'er
 On earth a morn so bright that no one weeps ?

Behold, the bridegroom bard essays to kiss
 His mother ere he hasten to the church ;

But while the bride awaits, the widow hangs
Upon the bridegroom's knees and weeps, till so
The moments flee, he *must* away ! He's gone !—
Sweet heavens ! a sudden cry pursues him, like
The ring of steel dashed through his brain—

“Return !

Return in haste !—Thy mother's dead—or—or !”





M I N N I E B L A I R .

PART IV.

DID Minnie write apologies to none
But me, for that withdrawal from all love,
And that concealment of her hiding place?
I cannot say! Her three days hid at home,
From even her mother's tearful gaze, before
Her secret flight were each with suppliant tone
Of him so dearly loved made very sad,
And even somewhat nauseous to her soul!
At length, the eve of her departure brought
The bard this brief reply:

“ ‘Tis well, and I
Rejoice to learn thy mother lives. To her
Thou owest life, and all the love thou hast
To spare from self. For me, I would not be
The cause of any tears my sense of right—
And of mine honour which is mine by right
Of God’s bestowal—might, by righteous walk,
Avoid. Thy mother’s *death*? Alas! I’d much
Prefer she’d hear of mine than I of hers
Through any *silly* misplaced love of mine!
For thee, I’ve but a few words left—they’re these—
Begone! and know, I’d sling the whitest fame
That ever maiden wore or prized, across
The common wayside hedge for every daw
To peck, before I’d sit upon a throne
If I therewith must be your wife and queen.
Farewell! be happy is my earnest prayer!”

And many days had passed from that strange flight
Of hers—ah days of tears and heart-aches long
And deep to me—when, lo ! a letter came
As to a prudent confident, but who
Must draw not near her hiding place, which was
To be but for a little time. She wrote,
Confiding thus in me that I might write
Two lines, or whatso' more might tell the state
Of her dear mother's health, or how she seemed
To bear with what had been. I wrote ! and know
Not what *besides* her mother's health I thought
Of when I wrote. An answer came—it ran
As this :

Oh, no ! I'm wedded now, dear Bill,
To disappointment, and I love so well
My mate, it is not clear I e'er shall make
Another choice. I shall devote whate'er
Of life I've left, to soothe whate'er I may
Of any disappointments I may meet !

For you, my *heart* responds to your esteem,
Good feelings, or—well !—call it love ! but then
My *head* demurs to such a love for one
So slighted as *I've* been. Believe me, it
Is not the fruit of healthy manhood such
As heart and head of mine conjointly could
Admire. 'Tis woman's—ay, or weaker girl's,
Or worse ! Oh cast it off, and tread it 'neath
Your feet, as I all future loves intend
To tread ; yea, all but *two*—my God's and what
For me, *He will!*

I beg herewith to add,
By way of postscript, something which, for aught
I wot, may add a crooked limb or foot
To yon old limping jest which, sneering, saith
From ladies' postscripts, oh, preserve us ye,
Our life's less grievous ill—

I wrote to Bob ;
Replied to his three days of patient—let

Me add of penitential waiting, till
My scorn might condescend reply. I wrote
As with a cauter's point made burning red—
And yet with *tears* as *hot*; and more of them
Than words! because I knew the heart whereto
I sent my bitters might not, in such case,
With sugared medicines be healed as I
Intend it shall or *must*. Ah, well, these hearts
Of ours, they sin! and so must suffer, here
Or elsewhere—*here*, oh may it be, sweet Heaven!

Oh, what a clumsy creature of a girl
Am I, dear Bill. You wont believe me when
I say I never loved Bob Sloan so well
As in the moments when I wrote the words
I knew would sear his inmost heart and soul—
And yet, perhaps, less deeply than mine own!—
That gentle heart, and noble, ay, and *more*
Than noble soul! You can, perhaps, recall
What once I said or wrote: He loves, and oh,
So well his mother! Bless him Heaven, and me
Forgive, for that this poor girl's heart of mine
So far forgot its duty to our God,
As love to such extreme of selfish love
Whom *mother's* love forbade. Alas—alas!
A Minnie once there was who yielded up
Her more beloved—exalted—holier Son,
That our poor sin-sick souls might, in God's time,
Rejoice! I to her holy prayers commend
Poor mother Sloan, her all-adoring son
And thee, my early mate, with these hot tears
And reprobation of myself—ay thee,
My early mate, so near to early love,
Who, by yon bunch of withered daisies, mixed
With southernwood and thyme, did'st make my heart
Rejoice to know the holy childhood loved
By my poor recollection still, had not
Been shed or shaken from thy soul upon
The threshold of the world's grand temple, where

The god of gold is worshipped. May thy soul
Be ever thus the nurse of thoughts to stay
Her course should e'er she dream or wander 'mongst
The fascinations of the years, and bring her back
If even to *stray* through withered daisies, as
Of late, and 'mongst those recollections which
Though wound, at times, they may, shall guard that soul
And keep her for thy God !

Forgive the words

That hailed the sacred offering of that fond
Young heart, the world hath not had power to change.
And when thou prayest, pray for me ! and say
The harshness used was for thy sake—*thy* sake
Alone ; meanwhile, I for myself look up
For grace to aid me while I try to know
And imitate that holier Minnie's love
For those who worked her woe—to imitate,
Howe'er remote, her sacrifice of self
By yielding up, as she, all loves I feel
Or may have ever felt for weal of some
Who *do*—of some who don't—of some who ne'er
Perhaps may understand.

Farewell ! be bless'd—

Be happy ! Only give the love with all
Its wealth of truth, so undeserved, and yet
So fondly offered me, to our poor Bob,
And I shall love thee for its sake. Farewell !

And after some eight days, my soul became
So sick from Minnie's silence that I needs
Must probe her secret by immediate search.
I stole away one morn without a word
To one of where I meant to journey, save
To one young maiden's ear, my *one* so loved,
And loving sister Anne's. My store of wealth
For travel or to aid the wanderer, if
Required, was sickly as myself. There lay
Some thirty miles or so betwixt our home,
And ever dear, since then, Rostrevor, whence

Had come our Minnie's letters. Here I gleaned
From tongues of village gossips that, of late,
A stranger lady, young and strangely sad,
And still more strangely beautiful of face
And form, had come and glided 'mongst them, like
The light on waters when the moon's at full ;
But she was gone. While there, her habit was
To live almost before the altar on
Her knees, to talk with none except the poor—
Of them, the poorest hung she more among,
And where they wore on cheek or mien, the words
Peculiarly unfortunate, she made
Her longest sojourns, gave her largest alms—
The last howe'er, to all where'er she walked
As ready as the palm that sought, I thought
The *last* more strange than all. Her means, alas !
Could not afford a wealth of alms—could not,
So far as I dare dream, afford herself
What now she must require. My search, thus vain
In closing, closed my soul, as 'twere, in thorns
That even now, and after many years,
Oft make me start, as if I felt them still.

And days went on, and I became that I
Could speak at home around the hearth of my
Vain journey and the gossips' tales. It struck
Me that my mother's smiles, while dwelt I on
At times, what might be then the wanderer's want
Of even bread, were far from what the eyes
Of my most tender mother should have shown ;
But, lo, a little time expanded all
Those little twinkling mysteries, and made
Them rays of light indeed. My hidden tale
Of unsuccessful search had reached the ears
Of Farmer Blair's good dame ; for smallest deeds
Well meant, like light a-back of clouds, ooze out
At times, through darkest wrapping odds and ends ;
And hence, the kind old lady shortly did
Permit my mother's lips to breathe within

My confidential ear what long had lain
Amongst her little stock of secrets—this,
Perhaps the holiest of them all: No fear
Of want for Minnie Blair! A nabob's wife
Was Minnie's Aunt with Minnie's name; and she,
When dying, had bequeathed to her young niece
A good two hundred pounds per an. No hand
Therewith to tamper when the little maid
Could number eighteen years, save Minnie's own!
Alas, poor Widow Sloan! hadst thou but known
What hath been thus revealed, how quickly might
The tinselled tropes and grand hyperboles
Of thy Miss Frond have shed their radiance 'neath
The simpler form of speech—the purer gold
Of Minnie Blair!

About this time, besides,
Was I indulged with knowledge, lifted half
The sickness from my heart. The absent maid—
While I, a woe-begone absenter, roamed
Amongst the tall and glorious wooded hills
Of old Kilbroney, stretched my jaded form
By gray Cloughmore; or, where the sea had gone
And left to penury's exploring eyes
The naked sands and all their secret wealth
Of such small shellfish as the needy seek—
Held wondering converse, saddening, too, with some
Old ragged remnant—kingly even in rags—
Of that once noble tribe, Magennis, which
In holier days, albeit days of storm
And cloud, produced the kings that reigned and ruled
In grand old gaelic pomp o'er cape and bay
And all the wondrous beauty, wondrous still
Of green Rostrevor's undulating vales.
'Twas even then, in those lone hours of mine,
Poor wandering, weeping Minnie Blair had poured
The stream of her distress in rippling black
Along a snowy sheet, scarce whiter than
Her soul, to soothe her most, of earth, adored

Her mother. Oft tear-stained and set, as if
By sobs, awry, it read :

My mother, had
You been some less beloved—adored by me
E'er this I would have soothed myself by some
Attempt at soothing thee ; my love of loves—
My warmest, deepest, most adored beneath
The angry heavens. To me could be no form
Of soul-affliction known, so poignant as
To know that thou, my mother, needs must grieve—
And grieve through faults of mine : therefore, have I,
Thus far, my soul afflicted for my large
Offence of loving to such wild extreme.
What holier love, a mother's too, with all
A mother's right to grant or to withhold
Forbade, with such a stretch of agony,
As well-nigh burst the heart—as nearly made
An orphan of that strange child-man, whose name
Henceforth my lips must never more profane.
Oh, never—never more !

Wouldst thou hear more ?

Thou wouldst—I know thou wouldst—I know—I know—
Alas, how very much I know that I,
My mother—dearest, dearest mother ne'er
Had known had I within the *light*—the *one*!—
But walked, as well I might with steadier feet,
Or holier end or aim. Perhaps had I
Remained at home, and caught and bore the scoff
And scorn and ridicule that late events
Must flash abroad among such scenes as ours—
Had I, I say, have staid at home and caught
Those dingier flowerings of the weaker mind
Upon my brow and cheek, and offered them
To Heaven, united with the scoff and scorn
Of Calvary, it might have eased me some ;
But could not e'er have been to me, the depth
Of soul-affliction that are those dear tears,
I even now, and at a distance here,

Behold upon thy cheek—oh, blessed cheek !
Now grown so pale. My mother,

Ah, wouldst thou
Hear even more ? I'm well ! A little out
Of sorts, at times, I doubt not ; but this state
Will pass, and happier come. I've *prudence*, thou
Wast wont to think ! Oh, think—*believe* so, still !
And soothe, for me, poor Father and the rest
As best you may. Some time again you'll hear
What I have got to say. Farewell ! Pray Heaven
For me, and say that I have sinned—alas,
My mother—ah, my mother ! Now farewell !

And time went on ! Meanwhile, I bound me, heart
And soul, for Minnie's sake to love poor Bob ;
And, strange ! began, ere I was well aware
To love him for his own, he *was* so pure
In all his words and deeds. And, yet methinks
I loved him more, for that his grief was *dumb*,
Or spake but through his eyes, his form and gait,
Like slow disease with certain death—perhaps
Spake clearer still in that fixed “ No !” wherewith
He closed the gate of all communion with
The Fronds !

And time went on, and therewith came,
At nows and thens, along the usual clear
And calm of country gossip, whispers brief
And dark, like dingy spurts along a stream
Whereof some wave, beguiled by sudden showers
To leave the honest crystal of its course,
And through its wandering moments rob
The richer moulds—thus came as 'twere, along
The, till of late, most lucid current of
Our rural chitchat eves, mysterious talks
Of gay Miss Frond, how she another love,
As radiant as her own conceit, had long
Indulged. A lordling—yea, no less ! the son—
Of him, the good old chief of whom we held,
The Blairs and we, our century-treasured farms ;

With him, a youth of morals not admired,
Of late the lady had been less reserved
Than heretofore, and did not seem to mind,
As once, the eye of eve, or whom she met
Upon the lonely walks wherein so oft
Indulged these samples of the larger world—
Its lower life and *all* —! . . .

Alas! for thee,

Poor Widow Sloan! Might only tears redeem
The past, how freely thine would flow. But tears,
Alas, oft come too late. Our uttered words
Or deeds enacted, howsoe'er their guilt
May be removed, as words and deeds remain;
And with them, ah, how oft, the evils they
Have wrought, live on and bud and bloom to breathe
Their subtle poisons through our after good!

Poor Bob! In Minnie's love 'twould more than seem
An angel's blessing flowered thine outs and ins!

But now, the current of events attains
A tidal form and force, and seems to sap
The remnant of the poet's wreck. The lease
Of Widow Sloan has suddenly disclosed
A flaw which leaves her holding at the will
Of him who agents the estate. The wail
Is seldom from her lips, or Bobbie's ears.

Meanwhile, I feel that somewhat must be done
To yield his thoughts another field for play
Or labour—even a different form of grief
Might be a boon. Our neighbouring village held
A fine old sample of the celt in Bob's
Maternal uncle, who in youth itself
Had won some laurels esculapian—still
Continued practice of his art. To him
His nephew was a second self. From his
Spare hours had Bob acquired a pretty fair
Acquaintance with the good old lore of Greece
And Rome; and oft the good old man had tried
To win the lad from verses to the field,

Wherein *his surer* laurels had been won,
'Twas not too late, and all assailed by three—
His mother, uncle and myself—our poor
Woe-stricken bard consents to give the winds
A little volume, and thenceforth to make
The pestle and the mortar be his muse
And lyre.

Hey-day—the poems faced the world
For good or ill ! They had their share of both—
Both censure and applause. No marvel this,
Because the world was like the book, and had
Its good and ill—its false and true—its eyes
To see ! and eyes, alas, that can't be made
To see, because they'd rather not. The world
Was not a world to change its ways for sake
Of Bob's new book, and so pursued its course
Of finding flaws at times where none there were ;
Of seeing beauties, even outpourings grand
And wondrously sublime. 'Twas sometimes food
For smiles, to see how some frail-tempered scribe
Had laid his genius and himself upon
The rack, that he by his own suffering might
Some beauty immolate and tear to shreds !
One bolder than the rest, howe'er, made pure
Invention serve his need of saying ill—
And said it long, diverging as he wrote
Still farther from the truth of what the vol.
Averred. This latter gave the bard a world
Of pain. It shewed a phase of heart and soul
That Bob, but for his eyes that saw, had ne'er,
Amongst the ills of our Adamic Fall,
Believed to own, or place or name. Poor Bob !
Our little book—I call it *ours*, for I
At Bob's request had given to it a name—
A name o'er which I sometimes loved to look
With tears for Minnie's sake, and for those dear
Old school-boy days of mine with all their strolls,
And interchange of flowers. Oh, Minnie Blair !

Most wondrous Minnie Blair ! shall e'er it be
Our volume's lot to meet thy wanderer's eyes ?
If so, its dainty title page shall tell
Thy last request to me was not in vain—
That Bob, the bard, is Bill's beloved. The book
Was named, and fittingly enough :

A LITTLE BUNCH
OF WITHERED DAISIES, MIXED
WITH SOUTHERNWOOD
AND THYME.

Some months
Had passed, and feeling all renewed in health
And somewhat lonely in my daily walks—
For Bob, in earnest truth had torn the chords
Of his wild harp to shreds, and seized instead
The honest pestle of his friend—thus I
My kit had stored and all prepared to part
My home and friends, for business life once more ;
When lo, one morn, a visit all unlooked
For, came in Bob, with strange wild flushes on
The wonted marble of his cheek and brow,
So breathless, too, without a word but two—
“ Read there ! ” and placing in the hand he grasped
And shook with such a force or fierceness, I
Became almost alarmed, a goodly sized
Production of the press—a magazine
Much thought of in its day. I looked, and where
He pointed, read, and closed my eyes at times
In wonder equal to his own. I read
The title of our Bobbie’s book, and then
“ A word to poets, and to critics too.”
“ O, little wildlings, fragrant, fresh and sweet,
And worthy of all love from those so oft
Unworthy hearts of ours, I joy, to meet
You so—I joy to meet a daisy, even
A withered one ; but, lo, we’ve here a *bunch*?—

"A bunch of withered daisies, mixed, we're told,
"With southernwood and thyme!" Sweet little things,
Ye almost make me weep, as ye recall
To me the sunny vales, and glens and knolls
Of other days—of trottings o'er them, when
We'd trifled so in gathering such sweet things
As daisies, southernwood and thyme, we feared,
From being late, to enter school. But then
It was such joy—is't *joy*? Ah, me, it was
The very ecstasy of then—the dear
Old days of childhood's holy innocence,
To have so fine a bunch that some loved mate,
Along our way, might love it more than his,
And make with us an interchange, that so
We might have somewhat to remind us through
The mark of stubborn tasks of light that our
Sweet interchanges made to shine upon
The faces of each other! Blessed days!
O, holy, happy childhood, purity
And love! O, blest remembrancer of those!

Dear little book, thou giv'st me joy indeed!
But *withered* daisies! Wherefore *withered*, when
We almost scent your fragrance while we read?
Did ye, indeed, foresee the scorn wherewith
So oft such holier sweets are hailed? Did'st thou,
Dear little book, poor timid little thing,
Foresee, indeed, the seeming malice shown
By some frail-tempered scribe who seems to lack
The common use of common truth, so far
That when he findeth not sufficient ground
Whereon to base his greedy love of blame
Creates the cause, and on the dingy spot
His falsehood makes, inflicts the critic's stab?
Alas, for our humanity! Alas,
Poor bard, thou hast indeed been taught by such
That he who feels more deeply than the crowd
Should keep beyond the circling of its arms—
Beyond the compass of such critic's voice.

Oh ye who needs must bleach your brows above
The furnace of a poet's heart—who needs
Must sing your songs to give the soul relief,
Sing on, and find relief, but dream not ye
That Nature's voice alone, or Nature's mode
Of setting forth herself, have place among
The grand requirements of our time ! The bard
Who wins our higher meeds, must sing by rule—
Must round his reasons—square his figures—carve
Old nature, soul and body, into shreds,
And fill the poor old veins with some hodge-podge
Of fire and mercury, simulating life !
And this is called High Art ! Why, *murder* may
Be called *high art* as well ; and all the more
We mangle, art be called the higher. Yes !
But I, forgive me, from some weakness o'er
My brain, demur to this, the poet's pen
Being used as 'twere a demonstrator's knife.
Give us your thoughts, true poet, as they come—
Fiery and honest—fiery, if you can—
Honest, or not at all ; nor heed these heads
Of wisdom who would send your *hearts* to school
That they might learn to *feel* by note, and give
Their feelings polished utterance. Ay, ring out,
True poet, wheresoe'er you be ; and while
The music of your natural pulses whirs
Upon your flush thought's virgin wings, prepare
To snap the fingers of your honest scorn
In any puckered face that mouths a blare
Of penny trumpets o'er some paltry rhyme
Or word that jingles in *false quantity* ;
Yet shows a lack of all that finer sense
Of vision—broader, firmer grasp of thought.
True critic, as true bard, must show before
We set his light above the herd that carp
Or croon they know not why or what. Mere word
Dissectors, for whose steel sound thought's too hard
A substance, what should ye be likened to ?

Those garden-vermin, that can slime and fret
The *leaves*, but find the root and stem too tough
For their digestion !

Still, for you, I say,
Ye poesy gardeners, mind your leaves, and where
You *can*, remove the sickly. They are sure
To bring these garden vermin through your daisies !
But and *see* you *mind* me : where removal,
Or exchange, some delicate vein or nerve,
Too deep for grub-perception, might destroy,
Or injure, let the weakling even be
And vermin mouthe away. I grant you when
They close their mouthings with a huge B.A.,
As *some*, and very lately, we have seen,
It makes one feel a little nervous, till
Reflection asks how often snooks was *plucked*
Before that surreptitious shuffle through ;
Then lengthening out the vowel, as advised,
We find B.A. does sound a trifle less
Sublime—in fact, becomes a *Bah* ! and so
The end is this—our mutton, which at best,
We might have thought it, dwindleth down to veal !
What then ? Why let the creature get his milk,
His dam, let's hope cannot be far away !

To be more serious—Poets born, indeed,
Ye've fallen on far from pleasant days ; for though
'Tis true the *genuine* British Bull is not
Without an honest kindly roar—ay, even
When called to greet some hot Patlander, green
With bile, as Tara hills, and smiting—may
It please you !—British tyranny, hip and thigh,
There are, alas ! too many calves to bah
Against the sublimated fool who'd set
His soul to stand upon its own bare strength,
Alone, poor bard !—In truth, I grieve to see
Thee, pale and proud—thy spirit sauntering through
That universe within thine own true soul,
For symphonies whereby these grosser things

Will sink thee in their grosser ignorance,
 While placing in their favourite heaven some star
 That sings, alas ! such music of the spheres
 As shakes the old proprieties to shreds—
 Such large mouthed utterances of tinted froth
 And fungus, sparked with foil, as common sense
 For want of better name might aptly term
 The stilt—spasmodic melody of *Bosh* ;
 But which that thoughtful tribe whose sign is “ *Bah*, ”
 With its, of course, diviner light proclaims
 The “ *Fire-wine of the gods !* ” What gods ?— Is’t they
 Of *Bathos* ?

Ah, poor poets ! What do ye
 Upon the mount with empty scrip, and heart
 At mouth, where every pyrotechnic quack,
 With coin and cheek, his score of quacks can find
 To puff great Flyblow’s caudled thunder !

You’ll likely, brethren, say, ‘tis extra bold
 To seek my game so near the regal grounds
 And close preserves of Criticism ; but I
 Have held chit-chats with critics, *Nature*-made,
 And *Art*-refined—ay, conned some lessons round
 Their knees, with all that true respect which all
 Whose *mission* ‘tis to *teach* should meet ; and though
 Divine perceptive powers are not amongst
 The things we buy and sell, or barter, like
 Our truth or honesty, I’ve got to know
 The false priest from the true, and *hold* I have
 A right good right to take account of *quacks*
 Where’er it seems me good. They use a right
 Unsanctioned by or *Art* or *Nature* ! Thieves
 They are, and *poachers* on their betters’ ground !
 And wherefore should an honest tongue grow black
 With silent lies while they are hurling death
 On *Nature*’s priests and prophets ? Poets born
 Are doubtless rare. The genuine critic who
 Himself a genuine *hard* should be, though lack
 He may the songful utterance, grows, no more

Than bards, like blackberries in harvest ! He,
And he alone, who knows a Jacob from
An Esau by the voice, should hold the horns
Of Nature's altar, when our young priests kneel
To offer sacrifice ! Remember Keats !
The young fowl's voice is dissonant when he crows—
Some notes are crowded, others drawn to shreds,
But he's a *true* bird, ne'ertheless ! and though
'Twere grievous to behold some honest work
Whereof our poor old world hath need, exchanged
For sighings of the streams, or gales done up
In tragic verse ; and though 'twere wrong to fill
Our streets and ways with school-boys overgrown,
Or whiskered babes shirking their useful toil,
To poke, with shrivelled hands, and long thin locks,
And awful gravity of phiz and puff,
Their whistling cornstalks in our faces, while
They'd blow cock-robin epics ; better 'twere
They'd pipe and puff till doomsday in the morn,
Than that the generous juices, flush in some
Young Byron's heart, should barm and turn to gall.
Ay, better 'twere for all, if even truth
And feeling were but empty sounds, as all
Too oft they seem !

Heigh-ho ! This *better* may
Not be, and this because we're civilized !
Indeed ? Perhaps so ! Civilized ? Why, yes,
Like Britain ! Built through nineteen hundred years
By Faith and Hope and Charity, upon
The model sketched by Christ. The fruits are these
Of all the philanthropic plans and works
We hear and read of—grand philosophies,
And large benevolence that would not wound
A fly ; that make it penal to outrage
A beast ; that prate of *finer natures* ; yea,
Hold up to scorn the man who passing through
A crowd has brushed a muslin skirt too roughly !—
That tell us men, whatever sun or snow

Have browned or bleached the outward, all are one
 Before the Maker—all are brothers—all
 Have feelings which, 'tis ours, where most our views
 May war, to touch with trembling, lest we wound !
 O, British Daniels ! Christian Scribes ! Alas !
 O, literary truth and love of right,
 Is this the way your loudest voices up
 The holy hills of human progress deal
 With human hearts and hopes ? Is this the way
 Ye deal with Heaven—that Heaven which ye bring down
 To sprinkle through each rigmarole of love
 And brotherhood—ay, *Christian* brotherhood !
 Like currants through your penny loaves ? Is this,
 I say, the way ye deal with Heaven ? For what
 Is mind's is God's, and given when even in form
 The humblest, that it aid some larger end
 Than we, at best, may know—some end that ye
 Essay to overturn and blast, that so
 Some hungry hate of *caste* or *race* may have
 Its dingy mouthful at your hands !

Is't well

To thus abuse the public faith, that looks
 In its simplicity and trust to you,
 That it may know to hold the *true*, and leave
 The counterfeit to whomsoever will !

Oh, would that this my reverence for the lights
 Of genuine song, or past or present, might
 Assume a form to reach the hearts and souls
 Of those who are by right divine, and that
 Alone, the sentinels at its gates !

Oh ye

Lone remnants of a noble pride, o'er whom
 That grand old phrase, the *Nature's* gentleman,
 Still sheds a sacred fire—that phrase which oft
 Hath flushed a glory through some sinking heart,
 Till round the brow it waved a sword of flame
 That kept the Eden of our father's souls,
 And made the Isles-man mighty 'fore his God.

Arise, ye Josephs, in this dearth of truth,
And while these recreant sons of Zilpah slay
Or sell your humbler kin, deceiving poor
Old Jaeb in his loving trust, go tell
The famished Hopes that groan for honour from
The British press, there's corn in Egypt yet !

Lift up the poet to his height ; make broad
The way for each *true* voice, howe'er confined
In compass. Some are here to speak, as 'twere
In thunder, to the lowlier ear, a sound
Without a meaning. Those, the lower-toned,
A mission have as well : 'tis to perceive,
Explain and touch the heart, where higher notes
From indistinctness fail. Behold, there's room
And work for all—and *all*, the humblest as
The highest, may be grateful to the ear
Of God, howe'er the creature man condemn !
“ My singers,” quoth the latter with a ‘Humph !’
“ Must all be Nightingales !” And yet, behold
The lark, the linnet—even little Bob
Of ruddy breast, who from our garden hedge
His sweet half-dozen notes of lyric love
Pours forth at morn or eve, as truly hath,
By Heavenly grant, the gift of Nature’s song,
As even the noblest minstrel of our groves !
The higher voice may win our worship, but
The lower wins our *love*, where hearts *have* love
At all ! God bless those humbler sweets of soul
Concealed amidst the unpretending poor—
They root and flower amongst the swinking crowd,
Like pure medicinal plants that grasp at life
Along the dusty highway’s marge ; but, ah,
As they, to perish even while we gaze,
And all, so oft unknown ; for lofty acts
To win immediate meed, or meet our ears,
Must grow from lofty hands. To other days
Must humbler toilers look for that, which from
The present, flows to station—that alone.

Hence, know, O thou who from those flowery worlds
Of love and beauty in thy soul, outpours
Upon the winds these solemn sweets of song,
'Tis only as the winds reel weeping from
The death of *daisies* on thy grave, they'll scent
Our ways with southernwood or thyme, or breathe
Thy name, or tell of thy poetic worth,
Amongst thy more imperious fellowmen!"

O, Minnie Blair ! O, wondrous Minnie Blair !
That vision of thine other days—of thine
And mine—of *triflings*, *trottings*, *interchange*
Of flowers, with some *loved mate*. Alas ! loved, *why ?*
Nay, nay, I ask not *now* ! Those entrances
To school, so often late—the daisies mixed
With southernwood or thyme, and all the rest,
Declare the writer clearly as her name
Is wondrous—oh, *how* wondrous !—Minnie Blair !

Poor Bob ! I, for a moment tremble locked
Within his wild embrace : and then he drops,
As in a swoon, and looks so haggard till
At length he hides his face and weeps. Delight
O'er this from peerless Minnie Blair has given
Him tears of joy ; but, lo, they're mingled soon
With those whose cause lies deep within a fount—
An earlier fount of love, and holier still—
His mother. She, the Widow Sloan, has but
The day before received ejectment from
Her home—the home that for her kin a home
Three centuries had been. The gash within
Her widowed heart is deeper, wider, made
By flying tales, oft interspersed with facts
Whereof she knew. 'Tis trumpeted along
The rural lanes, though in such undertone
As outraged feelings may command, when voice
Will *not* be stilled—that, lo, the fair Miss Frond
Had by her easy ways, won o'er her swain
Of birth and blood to work this grievous ill.

Alas, poor Bob ! Alas, poor Widow Sloan !
But, oh, alas ! alas ! and seven times
Alas ! for thee and thy sad, easy ways,
Whose name is wedded so with that word—"Frail!"





M I N N I E B L A I R .

PART V.

I'm on the ocean—on the boundless blue
In converse with the waves, and with at times
Within, I know not what—*myself* you'll tell
Me. Ah, myself! But who or what is he?
For *I* am not this *self* you speak of. I've
Within as 'twere a representative
Of all I see have ever seen ; and some
Of these, I feel, at times to be a much
More dearer self than I, I *think*, should hold
My proper self to be !

I'm here—I walk
The polished deck betwixt two beaming blues—
The heavens above, the boundless sea beneath ;
And ten God-granted summers have upon
My brow and cheek engraved their fancies, since
I last thus strode with nothing 'twixt my soul
And her eternal home but such a board
As this. What little tremblings of the heart—
Stray hopes and fears—a little cowardice,
No doubt, and yet with something like a gleam
Of courage glancing now and then upon
Each dim foreboding, like a twinkling flash
Of moonlight on the prints of feet within
A miry lane, when showers are o'er. 'Twas thus
When starting for the land where lay my toil—
About to be resumed. That closely veiled
To be! What might it yield me—*joy, or woe?*
What sights—what sounds—what foreign wonders had

I not to meet ! What friendly smiles and—then
Let's whisper !—tears, it *may* be, who can tell ?

Well, so it was. How is it now ? I fear
No future want ; for Providence has means
Bestowed for which I never toiled. My friend
And late employer—that word *late*, let it
Explain !—bequeathed me, bachelor, as he was,
The burden he had borne through life, in hopes
Of its great weight increasing every day—
The *burden* of his wealth—the heaviest load
The soul of man could bear, if borne for but
Itself ! *He* did not bear it for itself
Exactly. Well ! If not in all the way
He should, may it be mine to profit where
My fancy may suggest he erred !

Alas !

My fancy runneth riot with my wish
For graver thoughts ; for lo, in coming home
For good and all, 'twould seem I bring the same
Wild brood of wandering hopes and fears wherewith
I went abroad !

I think of home and all
Its holiness of heart, its starts, its stares,
And bursts of—“ See ! oh see who's here ! Its tears
Of joy, so mixed with *something* like that dear, dear
Long-ago, and yon wild bunch of daisies !
Its quick convulsed embracings—spasms of love
Wherein the hearts have but one grief—they *can't*
Burst through the bosom's bolts and bars, to pant
Awhile, more closely locked together ! Ah !
But then come other questioning fancies, far
Less grateful—still, with *reason* on their side !
Alas, and what a crowd of these, and all
With such a clamour, pressing each before
His neighbour, as his truer right. But blood,
Ye know, is thicker than your water, hence
I peep in fancy, at my mother's door—
How strange I seldom say *my father's* ! How

I wish that peep were real, but unseen,
 Till satisfied ! My mother, has her hair
 Grown really gray ? I'd rather not ; and yet
 In *this*, the last, of her beloved, adored
 Remembrancers, I clearly see a thread
 Of silver shining, like a wandering beam
 Of moonlight through a little cloud, that seems
 Of more than raven blackness. Ah, I've dropt
 Some tears at times, when *all alone*, o'er those,
 To me, tear-boding threads of silver ! Bless
 Thee, O, my mother ! Then, there's sister Anne,
 Of course she's wed, and calls her first-born son
 For Bill, the wanderer. Ha ! her home's upon
 My way from town, and can this wild desire
 That light I should not take from any door
 But *one*, till after I had caught upon
 My brow the burden of a mother's kiss,
 With all its wealth of warm and silent tears—
 Can this wild wish support me if I pass
 Sweet sissie ? Stay ! there is another road—
 A roundabout, I'll go by that !

The Blairs ?

Of course the flower has *paled*, as all suppose !
 Oh, strange—ay, strange, and yet of goodness far
 More strange than all that beauty thought so strange—
 O, Minnie—Minnie Blair ! But why such night
 Of darkling silence did my letters bring
 To my enquiries for the rest of these
 My early friends—the *parent* Blairs. My last
 Received *did* say a word or two, but then
 'Twas what I *knew* :

“ You know, dear Willie, that
 The Blairs, both old and young, led holy lives,
 And holiness, you know, brings happiness !
 And so you should resist enquiries such
 As yours, and nestle down in the belief
 Our friends the Blairs, or such as they, can't be
 Unhappy long ! ”

With this, or something like,
 Were all my long enquiries met. The cloud
 Must now disperse ; I'll see through all and soon ;
 For yonder, crowding at our good ship's bows,
 Are faces, some with smiles, and some with tears ;
 While every eye seems strained to pierce
 Yon mist, away upon the far sky's rim.
 'Tis *not* a mist, the captain says—but *home* !
 The holy hills of Ireland's home, once more !

And now, O, brother Bob, my bardic friend,
 Behold thy day of reticence, and all
 Its strange epistolary wilds of flowers
 And allegoric heights and depths, so far
 Beyond my mental grasp, is gone. Henceforth,
 I'll see these things whereof you wrote me in
 Such riddle-form, as thou, thyself hast seen
 Them. This Miss Frond, of whose dark ways I've heard
 So much, hast thou become enamoured of
 The damsel after all ? Thy words in her
 Behalf so oft apologetic, lead
 Me, now and then, to doubt thy constancy !
 For instance, this—

“ It boots not, brother Bill,
 How foul the slander be—how false the lips
 That shape it for the common ear are *known*
 To be, or even how innocent the life
 Acknowledgedly has been, of these or those
 So slandered, 'tis a bitter truth, there will
 Be some to give the slander room within
 Their hearts, believing it, though black as night,
 To be a solemn truth ; but what is *worse*
 Than all, *more* will there be who *don't* believe,
 And yet *pretend* they do ! ”

Perhaps so, Bob !
 Thou findest many truths as strange in that
 Strange ‘ *Flowery world of thine*, whereof a friend
 You never talk of much, once did both talk
 And write, how warmly—Minnie—Minnie ! O,

Thou wondrous Minnie Blair !

Ah-ha ! sweet home !

Sweet home, at last ! God save thee, Ireland ! Why,
I feel that, were it not an act to call
Wild eyes upon my face, I'd stoop to kiss
The stones whereon I move, as in a dream,
And dreaming thus, behold at last—at long
And last, I sit within the dear old home !

My father—ha ! His step, I've seen it not
So staid-like—still he's bluff and burly as
Of yore. I've felt the pressure of his hand,
His old “E-hay, my buck !” has quite the ring
Of earlier greetings, though just now 'tis closed
As by a cough—a slight one—still therewith
He finds it meet to turn aside and draw
His napkin ! Well, my mother ? that's all past !
And I'm so poor a hand at touching with
Descriptive tints those flowers that snatch their glow
From holier feelings, that I wave accounts
Thereof, or cover all with three dear words
Clift down to *two*—“We've met !”

And Widow Sloan—

I fear to *name* the Blairs, at present !—she,
The widow, wears her years, and makes them shine
Upon her, like a Sunday robe. She ne'er,
I'm told, enjoyed such health, or looked so well.

Her handsome cottage, by the way, and farm
Are up for sale. Her brother left no cash—
I mean the Doctor, who has passed away—
To speak of ; else, it seems, the Sloans would
Try to purchase out the dear old shelter !
Eh, well, I wonder whereabouts may reach
The sum 'twill go at ! How I'd like to—ha !
Here's surely sissie Anne ; but oh, how grave
And staid, and matron-like her step ! Alas
I quite forget to think what ten long years
Can do, at times—I see it there ! We've met !
She's half inclined to weep whene'er she looks

Upon my face ; and I, I know not why
A secret impulse feel, as if desire
To join companionship with tears ! And now—
Dear brother Tom ! Why, what a great brown hand !
Oh, bless thee, not so tightly ! These poor quills
Of mine, so like those dainty sugar-sticks
Whose names our long-ago began with, *Barley*—
These quills, dear boy, are not your own plough shafts.

But, Tom !—What means it, not yet wed ? Poor Tom !
A sudden something glistens, moist-like, in
The eye ; he glances side-long towards where sits
Our mother, veiling with her hands the face
Whereon those tears will not give over. Ah,
Dear Tom, I know the language of that glance.
It says, “ No second mistress of *my* heart
‘Till yon dear heart cease beating ! ” Bless thee, Tom !

“ And is it solid truth,” he asks, “ that thou
Art quite a millionaire ?

Ay, boy, too true !
I’ve need of all your prayers, that I may walk
As if without its weight !

“ O never mind
The weight ! Some lady so-and-so, may help
To make all that endurable.”

A burst
Of weeping, mixed with “ No ! he’ll never wed !
I know—that is, I’m sure he never will ! ”
Broke forth from sister Anne ; while now-and-then
As mutely, almost as her tears stole out
The words, as if she whispered to the drops—
O, Minnie—Minnie Blair ! I started at
The name so breath-like whispered—

Sister, love !
Wilt thou, who loved our Minnie’s shadow on
The grass, with more of those sweet whispers breathe
Away this cloud, and let me look upon
Those dear, dear early friends of mine, the Blairs !

And sister Anne at length found words, but not

So many as the tears wherein had lain
And steeped her thoughts of Minnie Blair, till now
Half decomposed, as 'twere their fragments, stole
At fits and starts along the dusty waste
Of my perception. Thus I caught a bald
Supply of prickly odds and ends, whereof
If fancy might, to rear, in school-day mode
Some little shade, however thorny, where
In lonely hours I might slip in to search
Amongst the tears, that dear, dear eyes had shed
Behind my being—haply search, and *find*
Some precious drop by holier feelings changed
To light, or flowered crystal, as it fell !





M I N N I E B L A I R.

PART VI.

Is't but a fancy of my own, that oft
Our anger, over sin or wrong, may be
As hateful in the eyes of Heaven as what
Had set our torch a-blaze ! Again, how oft
Our anger burns o'er others' sin for this
Alone—*we've thereby suffered!*—not because
It was high treason to the King of kings !
Ah, verily, in both of these there's much
Amiss ! He needs much wisdom who would meet
The twain, or either, with a righteous wrath !
Whate'er the sin, it better were, perhaps,
To moderate the warmth of our rebuke
By dropping, say, a good half dozen tears
In yon sly nook where we so oft permit
Our own misdeeds, all unrebuked, to take
Their cool, but doubly sinful nap !

Miss Frond,

I learned, had done much wrong—had pressed her wrath,
Before her like a headsman's axe, and made
It dig three graves for those she could not force
To love her ways—three graves for my dear friends,
The Blairs—my *three*, perhaps, should have been *four* !
The fate of Minnie, none that knew her knows !
Her brother, beauteous as was she and tall,
And graceful as a mountain roe, and first
In every good, and gentle, save to sin,
As is the light of dawn on famished flowers !—

Eugene, in absence of her nobler swain,
Had this Miss Frond perceived one evening at
A rustic ball—a harvest home, or *churn*,
As rustics term, in Ulster phrase, the feast
Or merry-making, given by farmers when
Their grain is fully down and *stooked*. Eugene,
Our lady-looker on perceived to be
Th' observed of all observers, standing 'mongst
His comrade reapers, like a fruit tree flowered,
Where shrubs abound. Her avaricious eye
Perceived the value set on all he said
Or did—his slightest word, his faintest smile,
By all around—the old and young alike.
'Twas quite enough to make, in lonely hours
At least, his ready smile, and low, sweet voice
Desirable. She, hence, from that blithe eve,
For many days, discovered daily need
To drop in at the Blairs. It was so strange,
She thought, of that most sweet and lovely girl,
Miss Blair, to do as she had done—at least
To do, for sake of that misguided youth,
Bob Sloan, what every sparrow-wise-one all
The country round believed was done amiss.
And then, it was her wont, with smiles so faint
And sweetly wise, in those most silvery tones
She knew to modulate with such deep art,
To caution poor Eugene, of whom she hoped—
On word and honour—Ah, she did!—to hear
A better fate! But he must keep him from
Those talking, singing folk, she saw him 'mongst
So lately—not at all companionships
For him; ah, no! She really must, she thought,
Just step a little from her sphere, if but
For his sweet sister's sake—whom she so grieved
She had not better known in time—and take
Eugene in hands, a little now and then!
But, now, she must be gone; won't Master Blair
Just step a little with her o'er the fields?

And Master Blair for some few times did give
Consent ; but loving less at *every* time,
The somewhat looseness of her speech and ways,
He turned against these walks, and when she frowned
Thereat, he frowned in turn, and spoke his mind
So freely, that she saw she was *foreseen*—
And more—with all his soul despised !

Poor youth,
He did not know two things, which, had he known,
Had likely smoothed his speech, albeit frowns
Within might brood and deepen still more dark
Upon the brain, o'er her and her's. He knew
Not that his father, for the last nine months
Upon his farm, a tenant held at *will*—
Which meaneth, saith the law, thou art to quit
And leave this farm at any hour it please
The lordly owner to say “ Go ! ” He knew
Not that his lady guide held in her smiles
The key to ope the agent's lips, and send
That desolating word with all its dread
And thunderous meaning on the house of Blair,
The last life of whose lease was gone. Alas,
Poor Blair ! thy term of “ lives *renewable* ”
Had closed as well !

This agent was a man
Who nursed the foppery of his youth amongst
The blossoms of the grave : for, though his hair
Was gray, the music of his last new boots
More dignity bestowed his manner than
His deepest dreams of moral rectitude !
As may be guessed in all due form, right soon
That woe, the Notice of Ejectment, came !
The poor old farmer loved his father's home—
The very stones that grated now and then
Against the irons of his plough were not
So bad as those in any neighbour's field
He knew of—even they, as all things else,
Appealed to recollection for a tear,

At thoughts of parting. Then the good old dame,
Alas ! was she to leave the pleasant home,
About whose doors, in memory's eye, she still
Could see, though kindly tears were quick to come
And close the scene ; her lisping latty-white,
A four-or-five year old in battle dread
With some pugnacious gander, all to shield
That dearer self, her brother, dear Eugene.

O, Minnie—Minnie Blair ! hast thou no dreams
To-day of her who dreams of little else
Than thee ! Poor mother Blair ! She also had
Her spots of reverence through her fields—some bank
Of brighter green—some hidden nook that gave
An earlier primrose to her babes ; and here
And there, in this field or in that, some huge
Old boulder patched with dusky white or green—
Perhaps some little knoll, that, nipple-like,
Adorned the daisied bosom of the mead
Preserved for pasture. Oft on this or that
Had climbed the youthful matron, babe at breast,
To wave the reapers home to mid-day meals !

The farmer bore the word of *quitting*, first
As if in stupor, staring upon this
Or that, within and out his premises,
With dull fixed eye, and on his lips
That low continuous sound we call a *wheep*
When meant to be a whistle. By-and-by
His manner changed, and litigation gave
His outer, as his inner man, a tone
Defiant. This made matters worse, enraged
The agent who, with haste as well as hate,
The doom of all the Blairs inscribed on black
Escutcheons !

Came the hour, at last. The hawks
Of law with strength and courage and dispatch,
A moment made to seem majestic 'neath the shade
Of Law's imperial plumes, flung forth upon
The lawn the treasured purchase of, perhaps,

An hundred golden years. The little bits
Of finery—wood or porcelain, which so oft
To humble fancy, in her humbler dreams
Of what the great world, far away, defines
Luxurious adornment—mounts along
The years with daily handling, daily view
To value often fabulous; ah, what
Were they, or all the tears, their reckless wreck,
In waste of would-be wrath, or needless haste
Occasioned to the weeping dame, who loved
To childishness the very nails that shone,
With little brazer brows, along the walls,
O'er scrap of landscape, pots of flowers—or, say
The portrait of some early friend, as *friends*
Were painted long ago !

The kindly hands
Of neighbours drawn from near and far, to weep
With those would not be comforted, caught up
The mass of disarray, and bore and stored
It here or there, as this near home or that
Had space for its reception, holding, for
The homeless owners' sakes, each remnant housed,
In reverence seven-fold increased by that
Sad truth each remnant seemed to say, when looked
Upon—it had no other where to house !

The frail old pair were welcomed, like the flowers
Of May, where'er their faces turned. Eugene,
Howe'er, had distant friends who must, at once,
Receive such statements of the case, as none
But he can make ; and hence, a journey south
Demands his instant starting by the coach
That travels through the night. Alas, for poor
Eugene, the winds of that November night
Smote through his over-heated blood and frame,
By grief, and one might say by even wrath—
Such wrath as his—stirred up to fever height,
With no allaying balsam in their breath,
And, hence affection of the pleura, as

The Faculty described his case, laid o'er
His youthful manly heart in six moon's time,
Yon black escutcheon of the tomb, inscribed
In silence by the general mind—"Miss Frond's!"

A little cottage, some three miles from thence,
Their loved abode, at moderate rent, received
The stricken trio—father, mother, son;
And thence, when that wild fever had performed
The will of Heaven, was borne to its last rest
That wreck of human beauty, manliness
And truth, so loved where'er he trod, the young
Eugene. The burial group, as may be well
Supposed, was large. That was in no wise strange!
But strange, indeed, 'twas thought, to see amongst
The mass—no truer mourner there, the man
Whose act had brought to pass the woe. And he
Had even tears to sprinkle o'er the dust,
And words of gentlest soothing—even more,
That from the soul of penitential grief
Hung on his lips, as if afraid to fall,
As water drops at times, from some gray rock
Whose adamantine eyes count kinship, though
They weep, with all the stone within. Poor man!
The grand old father of the youth, thus slain
By thy wild acts, with what a Christian wealth
Of meekness doth he answer thy *too late*
Repentance—"Nay! 'tis not so grievous, this
Our walking grave-ward—even with dust beloved!—
If while on one hand we have death, 'tis felt
As sure, on t'other we have Christ!"

Poor man!

Already hath he learned how blindly hath
He played a sort of pussie's paw, or worse—
A very Jackal to the lion hates
And vices of that lioness, whose heart
So few could read—still fewer understand!
In sooth, he grieved a righteous grieving, which,
Though all too late for my dear friends, the Blairs,

Came, let us hope, in time to do much good
Where still required. He even besought, with tears,
The gray old pair, to come, that he might make
Whate'er amends he might, and take and hold
As erst possession of their farm, with lives
Renewable at will !

“ For what ? for whom ? ”

Enquired the poor old man, with head bowed down
Submissive to the will of Heaven, although
His tears lay thickly on the grass betwixt
His knees ; his once blithe voice broke up in shreds
By feelings which the heart refused, in all
To hold, but sent them, whitening, where they made
Wild action on the lips.

Ah, no !—no farm

For evermore for poor old Blair !—no farm
But yon green narrow patch, where angels—who
So wise that he may answer “ No !”—keep watch
Above the ashes of his child. It won’t,
He sighed, be long till I shall sleep as he !
Nor was it, though he walked companionless
A little while ; for dear old mother Blair,
Beneath this double stroke, stretched forth her hands
In eager haste to clasp with saint’s embrace
What she perceived to be the will of Heaven.
O, dear old Mother Blair ! Oh, for a heart
Like thine, to lie a-bed, and ring with tears
Of passionate appeal, that pardon might
With grace’s quenchless thirst for grace, be poured
Upon their heads who wrought these grievous wrongs !
Oh, for the lips, like thine, strange Mother Blair,
That laden with the low, sweet melodies
That come with coming death, had only such
Replies anent forgiveness for her wrongs
As saints accord who crucify the flesh !

“ Alas ! why question my forgiving love—

“ My earnest prayers for those—for her who slew

“ My dear, brave boy ? Shall I—shall we—shall you

"With *unforgiving* lips beseech the bright
 "And blessed Mother of our dear, dear Lord,
 "To intercede for us whose vices pierced
 "Yon sacred hands?—*My son!* Ah, yes!—
 "He *was* both good and—well!—I know—I know—
 "What would you add; but, go—think on the King
 "Of kings!—Go, seek the rest of my reply
 "Amongst the holy dews that glisten through
 "Your *lonely* rosarie!—There muse, and learn
 "How mean and wretched in God's eyes must be
 "Our *best* forgiveness of a wrong!"

Sweet soul!

'Twas thus she passed away. Her funeral
 Announced as *private*, ne'ertheless gave cause
 For whispered scandal. Visitors, it seemed
 From foreign parts, which means, of course some place
 Or places not quite clear to local eyes,
 Were there—two strangely muffled dames, of whom
 It was averred, on certain sides, they scarce
 Could be, in all, quite fitting folk to light
 The darkened lattice of the Blairs. Howe'er
 With these, whate'er they were, away, it seems
 The lonely gray-haired mourner went, and left
 The gossips, sweet and sour alike, aghast
 With dingy fancies, whitened now and then
 With something sunny from our Parish Priest.

Ah, well, we all have friends or relatives,
 Perhaps: and these, at times, have vices like
 Our own. One thing, I ween, is pretty clear:
 The vice that in *ourselves* may oft escape
 Our view, or seem, if shown, to shine amongst
 The multitude of virtues hourly sunned,
 And duly recognised, such vice perceived
 In friend or stranger would arise and dim
 A thousand virtues in our eyes, perhaps
 Indeed, make up our total estimate
 Of him, or her.

But came there never more

Account of our old friend, *The Blair?* It came,
Indeed, but with it came his dust to rest
With those he loved. The mourners were but some
Half dozen—"One dear friend of thine," broke in
My sister, with a stifled sob, "was there—
Chief mourner too—the dear young Father Byrne,
Who was our curate when you lay a-bed
So long—you don't forget him. No! I'm sure!"
Ah, Father Byrne! I'd know him sooner by
His first sweet name—dear Father Martin, so
I named him then! I loved him for his love
Of her whose "eyes are doves' besides what's hid
Within!" I loved him for the white upon
His cheek, it seemed so like as if he'd lain
With Him who feeds among the lilies. Ah,
That dear young Priest, it was his wont to sit
Beside my couch in evening hours, and soothe
My vagrant fancies in those hours of ail,
For in the School of *Ail* himself had learned
To feel—ah, more, had learned to *love* his ail
For love of Him who loveth us!

But where,

I asked, is dear young Father Martin now—
Not curate still, is he with us? "Oh, no;
He has a parish somewhere south, perhaps
In Cork or Dublin. Only, though, a few
Days since, we saw him, looking well. He came
Anent the purchase of that farm of Sloan's—
He wants it for a friend!

And *may not have*

It, Father Martin, and beloved of mine,
Although he be, if *money* can prevail!
I answered, in a tone that made the dear
Old timbers I so loved to look on crack
Beneath the start of those who occupied.
That farm of Sloan's, *I want*, whereon to rest
Me, when my locks grow white from niddling 'mongst
The plum tree blossoms. "Be it so!" said all.



M I N N I E B L A I R .

PART VII.

AGAIN came Father Martin!—What a change!
He looked so well, not sickly, as of yore,
But radiant as his head had lain, if 'mongst
The lilies, where those lilies must have fed
On light and fragrance, borne by truant airs
From paradisiacal flowers!

And I have thrilled
In his embrace; have heard this visit must
Conclude his purchase of the farm; have told
My fixed design to thwart him; told him why,
And marvelled that he did not seem aggrieved,
But wondrous calm—perhaps, I might have said,
A good deal *inly* pleased!

And thus, all things
Went on as I desired. The farm became
My own—my own a little—Ah, these whims
Of ours!—a little—very little while!
The lease—made out in name of Bobbie Sloan!—
I fear I felt a good deal of that joy
Which borders oft so close on pride, when my
Old friend and school-mate—sometimes foe, of old!—
Received from me with tears—he had no *words*
Wherewith to thank. The *tears* did me as well!

Thus Bobbie Sloan and I lived neighbours once
Again; and wondrous was his love for me,
Like that of one we read of long ago—

"Above the love of woman"—mine, for him,
No less!

And Father Martin! what a time
Of bliss had Bob and I along those dear
Old summery years of life, when, now and then,
'Twas planned to make our visits match with his
Vacations. Wanderings here and there, we made
Amongst the wild or more romantic nooks
Of this our own dear Isle, who almost seems
At times, as if her every power were strained
To vie with us her sons, in vagrant whims
Of up and down—in fitful turns of frown
And smile, in mountain shaven to the crown—
A stark spectator of the vale beneath,
That seems as if some tempest tortured sea
Had in a moment's space been changed to earth,
And dipped in flowery dimples here and there,
With little rounded swells that sometimes rose
And soared with bald and angry brow, and but
As 'twere to droop all sudden and abrupt,
When weary with affected frowns, to some
Sweet sheet of rolling green again. This, in
Its turn to soar and frown, or tuft its brow
A little space with flowers, then stretch away,
Till weary of surrounding light and green
It hides its iron limbs from view, perhaps
In dingy chasm, precipitous and dread.
Again we turn us where some moor is crossed
And vale is gained, whereon we stand as on
Enchanted ground, to wonder and adore
The glory of the Mind—the *one* Eterne—
The fancy of the Infinite—the Soul
Of Beauty and the beautiful who, though
He, Infinite in power, inhabiteth
Eternity, all meekly deigns, as here,
To be revealed through tint and form of flower
Or leaf, in wizard glens, in cloud-like clumps
Of beech and pine and sycamore, and e'en

As here, where that lone giant oak, high priest
Of solitude, drops down, amid the gloom
And glory of his years, his leafy tears
O'er this poor lisping stream that hath, perhaps,
For centuries its music murmured through
His converse with the mighty winds, or through
His milder anthems to the placid moon
Of summer eves !

Ah, well ! these wanderings o'er,
Far other sights and sounds, at times were ours
When pierced we through the crust of formal things
To shudder o'er the city's dingy heart.

We stand beneath a roof that here and there
Admits the light ; but shall not do so long,
For workmen here and there use busy hands.
This hovel hath a tale, saith Father Byrne,
'Tis rented by "The Sisters," and receives—
Or rather *shall*—when fairly fitted up,
Such erring daughters, as my search shall prove
True penitents to be. I've dropt on some,
For instance three or four who occupy
Just now a chamber less in need of such
Repairs as those you look on. One, at least
Of these, whose flesh, like an unbridled beast,
Had borne her soul, 'twould seem with whirlwind speed
Through almost every form of sin, demands,
If but for that, a more than passing glance.
Time was, she moved, I've learned, in polished life—
As life, beyond the cavils of the crowd,
In *polished* phrase, perhaps is *fitly* styled !
When here, she worked what *ill* to her seemed *well*?—
As God's permission, to our poor blind eyes,
Has something like a regal stretch, at times ;
Howe'er, we need not follow where she led
In this our glance. She sinned, she suffered ; sinned
Again, and deeper, till she *ceased* to sin !
Which means, there is a state wherein all sense
Of sin is lost, because its utmost depth

Is reached, and brighter recollections, should
They even come, unnoticed die amid
The all-surrounding night. But even there
God's love and mercy, in the form of an
Afflicting angel, sought and found her out.
Her fever, though, I'm told there was some fear
Of slight relapse, is all obedience now
To means employed. The doctor is a man
Who, from our Lord *refuses* fees ; attends,
Too, every day. The nuns, at times, both day
And night, to feed all wants that love should feed,
For some of these white daughters of the cross
Have wealth or wealthy friends, and all is used
In mercy, and for "Mercy's" sake, in His
Dear name, who is thereof, both fount and stream.
What marks, howe'er, the fate of her described
With lines of more observant tint than most
Remain untouched. Her fever found her not
Till, first, her poverty and rags, made brows
That once had smiles for even her 'mongst old
Associates in crime, begin to wear
A sort of death's head shadow when she dared
To glance upon them as they met. In fine,
The doors of vice became almost ashamed
To ope and blink upon her loathliness :
And hence refused the bread that vice for years
Had won, she sought, where'er she might, whate'er
Her tears and wretched looks might force from such
As might perceive, 'neath even such a cloud
As hers, some lingering line of light, and help
Her for its sake. Here, conscience spoke, and here
The angel of affliction made her bed
Behind some stables, where their refuse reeked !

It is not known how long she thus had lain,
But, haply ere the day had died, or as
The night came down to cover scenes of guilt,
Some old associates in crime perceived
And recognised the stricken wreck ; but though

Amongst the vilest vile, the human heart
Is human still, and hath a leaning—not
Quite love, perhaps, and yet not quite opposed
In all to all its erring kind—o'er this
Lone outcast, sympathy was little shewn.
Her old imperious ways, acquired in that
Our so-called polished life, still hung about
Her like a poisoned robe, forbidding all
Low dreams of an equality with *her*!
Howe'er, her tale went forth, and ramified
And spread, till, lo, it reached the "Sisters'" ears
With all its first and last, their pros and cons,
'Twas such a tale of sin and suffering as
At once to stir the hearts of all who know
What love and mercy often hide beneath
The heaviest cross the Saviour sends. But two
There were amongst our holy sisterhood
Whose hands were ever first in works of love
And almost ever full of painful acts
That somewhere changed to flowers. A work of joy
Exceeding 'twas to those, the Sisters Anne
And Agnes, all, and both at once, for they
Were never seen apart, to press their hearts
And souls to serve our Lord on such a long
And rugged road as 't seemed before might shine,
In such a case as this, the little star
Whose rays exclude all after dark. It seemed
Indeed to all, except perhaps the twain,
A long and hopeless night of labour—night
That scarcely hinted at a morrow. All
The more, for being so, 'twas underta'en—
And laboured in and loved.

"A cottager

Was found who took poor Fraility in, and nursed
The creature through her two relapses till
She, finding strength restored, prepared to pass
To other scenes. I made my visits oft,
And found my penitent, a penitent

Indeed. Her accusations of her heart
And soul were boisterous, at times, and struck
Her nurse with horror. Every form of guilt,
Not even excepting murder, in a sense,
She brought with wild upbraiding to her door.

These only seemed to set the love within
The hearts of Sisters Anne and Agnes more
Ablaze. I hold a document was signed
By Sister Agnes in due form whereby
To save the sinner from all future sin
As well as suffering that good nun bestows,
From date some three months back, the handsome sum,
For life, of twenty pounds per an. 'Tis thought
The joy o'er this brought on a third relapse,
When, lo, our patient utterly refused
To pamper vileness, like her own, with rest
Or shelter other, for the time than that,
As here, the nuns afford to vileness yet
To be removed. Hence, is she here ; you'll see
Her by and by, or from that window on
Your right, that little screen withdrawn, you'd see
Her as she lies a-bed.

But, here, behold,
The Sisters come—let's stand aside ! My tale
Has quite shut out my thoughts of time. We should
Ere this have gone !

As Father Martin ceased,
Two ladies cloaked, and wearing hoods and veils
Made entrance ; one advanced, and one appeared
To gaze a moment, as if doubtful what
Our presence meant. Anon she stretched, and laid
Her hand against the door, as if a sense
Of weakness forced her thus to seek support—
She trembled, too, from toe to crown ; and looked
So stricken, Father Martin, beckoning back
Her sister, gently asked her was she ill ?
The Father's voice so reassured her, that
She raised her hand from its support, and stepp'd,

As with a bound, like one, on sudden waked
 From sleep, and passed us, though it seemed to me
 She trembled somewhat, leaning too, against
 The door-frame of the patient's chamber, as
 She crossed its threshold. Meanwhile, nurse, I saw
 The little curtain had withdrawn, and hence
 The patient's bed was seen. I could not stay
 A glance, the scene so struck me. There, at that
 Bed-side, a lady knelt, her face dipt deep
 Amongst the covering. There the patient sat
 Her hands a-wringing while with frantic voice
 She wailed—

“ O, Sister Agnes, blessed one,
 Why weepest thou ? Have I not been restored !
 I'm well !—Oh, do not weep so, or you'll break
 My heart ! I'll sin no more—you *know*, I wont !
 Your bounty and your prayers have saved my soul
 From sin and suffering evermore—”

“ Enough

Of this,” said Father Martin, let's retire,
 “ At least till they the nuns have gone !”

With steps

As noiseless as we could, we passed to where
 The lane shewed opening to the fields, once more !

That was an eve of many moods with Bob.

It was the wont of Father Byrne and he
 To spend the eve till came the hour for prayer
 In dissertations which I loved to hear.

'Twas sometimes literature or art in all
 Its various forms ; and sometimes had a smack
 Of metaphysics, which, of course shut up
 All doors of my reflection, till a change
 Of subject oped them up and gave my tongue
 A chance of being tongue again. But on
 This eve my friend was smit with silence most
 Unusual. Father Martin tried his best
 To draw him from his thought.

“ Come, Bob, stir up

And leave that intellectual self you've got
Within, to flounder 'mongst his wealth, and join
Thy humbler friends without!"

"I have," said Bob,
"My thoughts and so has he." Ah, thus it is
That thoughts, as from a far off land, will come,
Like visitors unknown, unbade, and thrust
Their thorny jests upon our quiet, till
The pricked soul bleeds for years. We can't dismiss
A visitor till, visitor, he come;
Nor then, were't courteous, till apprised of his
Intent, which process is the ground for what
Will follow thorns be that or flowers.

For me,

I've often sought to find, *within*, replies
T ocerain jagged questions which occur
Perhaps to most, on which our books, our best
Are mute, or all so closely veiled in this
Or t'other figure, that we lose both shade
And substance. Looking thus within, I find
That *he* you call *myself* is not a whit,
At times, on certain points, more learned than *I*!
For instance, now, I've looked upon yon sun,
When, like as 'twere a god himself, he swam
Abroad sowing his glory o'er the hills
And heavens, with such a wealth of silent love,
While I, in fancy, flew before the hours and saw
Him, like the light that paled on Calvary,
Go down amid his blood and leave the night—
Till comes the resurrection of the stars,
As when the saints arose, while still the Cross
Stood red—the all unnecessary night.
Another Pilate writing o'er his head
The kingly epitaph his own good deeds
Had writ so well!

I saw, and said the hand
Of ill had *surely* busied there. I looked
Again, and saw the dazzling youth—the green

And gold—the soul and beauty of the Spring,
And all the jewelled Summer's wealth of life,
And Autumn's thrice imperial purple, fade
And pass, like tinted air-bells on the breath
Of Winter's polar woe, which, as a means
Of working weal, were not, I *know*, to such
A God as ours, necessity ! Yea, even
When Summer panted on the hills, in sweet
Excess of joy, I've seen the gentle breath
That cooled the brow of childhood, raising scarce
One holy ringlet from its rest, arise—
Go forth, and with a thousand-clarioned voice,
Spread death and desolation wheresoe'er,
On land or sea, along his track, the powers
Of love or beauty had prevailed ! I saw
The ill and what it worked, and may have guessed,
Or known the cause, as *men* explain such things ;
But, oh, *necessity*, for sake of *good*—
If good may come, at *such* a cost—in fine
At *any* cost, where power exists to bring
It gratis—there, I *asked*, but SELF held dumb !
I looked, in fancy, where your Puma springs,
Sheathing his fangs in poor defenceless flesh,
And thence, beneath the waters, where the tribes
Come forth, like creatures nursed by Nature, that
They might make war upon each other, armed
With means of death—ay, torture !—each to use
Them on his fellow—to what end ? To keep
In life the means of ever mangling what
Appears, at times, to serve no purpose save
The mangler's thirst for wreaking wrong !

I SAW !—

And feeling that before a mystery
I stood, I asked this intellectual self
For explanations which refused—I—I—
“ Speak up ! Speak out, dear Bob ! What did
You then ? ”

“ I bowed and thought of something else.”

" And yet, dear friend, thou might'st, while bowed, have
leant

Thy brow upon the breast of this dread one,
And whispered, " Dearest Lord, oh let me weep,
And wonder and adore, for turn me where
I may, my eyes grow dim o'er mysteries great
As this ! For instance, here's my brother Man,
Who with his god-like form and all his vast
Intelligence, so strongly clear in that
Vast work, though *small*, the human eye—so much
A marvel in itself, for breadth, as well
As subtilty of grasp—that lowest forms
Of flesh can read the power within ! Well, then,
This noble representative of all
That noble is, according to *himself*—
Who knows so well what wounds ; and what a wound
Produces in his own poor flesh—or *worse*,
His *mind*—this marvel of—take note !
Such wide extending sympathies ; behold,
There is in *night*, in Winter's storm, or in
The Summer's blast, or thunder's bolt—in seas
Or forests, nought more monster-like than he
Too oft appears to brother man !

When thou

Seest this, and all that thou hast seen, and add
Thereto, that all experience simply shows
No light can live below, however bright,
Or large or dim or small, without its shade ;
And that nor God nor man hath trod our earth
Without some twitch of suffering in His flesh—
Some tinge of darkness on His robe—when thou
Admit that, even as thou sayest, these things
Seem necessary, doth admission make
The why of such ought clearer ? "

" Not a whit ! "

Thou sayest—" How oft with tears !—no lasting good,
'Twould *seem*, can come without some suffering first—
That suffering 's a producer, that the soil,

The *only* soil whereon *heart's-ease* is grown !—
 Yea, even thine own poor Earth's warm bosom, must
 Be torn and mangled ere it yield thee bread ;
 Admitting these—admitting more, that from
 Our Father's hand to Good ; but good may come,
 'Neath good's reverse. "What sayest thou ?"

" *It is !*"

" Well then, it *is*, and of *NECESSITY* ! "

" *Necessity* beneath *ALMIGHTY POWER* !

What meanest thou ? "

The good man sighed,

" Alas !

Turn back, to where of late yon glory paled
 On Calvary. There bow down, and muse and learn
 From what thou there beheld—from all that thou
 Hast seen or heard or thought of sufferings since—
 How wondrous are the words, the *hate of sin*,
 The love of Justice having those two words
 Attached—God's Infinite ! The whole that thou
 Hast seen or known, or dreamt of during life,
 Of sufferings united, merely make
 The finite representatives of Hate
 And Love immeasurable as are
 The bright blue fields of space—the heavens themselves !
 O, Infinite ! O, Infinite ! Till man
 May read thy boundless meanings through and through,
 Thou *wondrous word* ! nor man nor angels e'er
 May know the hate of sin, the love of man
 That led the Most Beloved of God to bleed
 For man's redemption. Ah, how boundless were
 The twain, perceive as best thou may from all
 Thou'st been perceiving ; but, remember then,
 When all hath been remembered, thou the edge,
 The *outer* border of the real scarce
 Thy finite shade hath shadowed. Canst thou spread
 Before thee, like an open page, in all
 Their heights and depths, and lengths and breadths, that
 have

Nor first nor last, the glorious heavens, and mark
Their most minutest touch of light and shade
The wondrous whole enclosed, at once within
Thy common glance or gaze. If so, then mayest
Thou know and feel the mystery of that Love
For man—that love of justice, and that hate
Of sin that overcame the Father's love—
Love, infinite : for our dear Lord, His Son,
So far as see Him hang in sufferings—they,
So wondrous, too !—till paled, upon the Cross,
That “ Brightness of the Father's glory ” ! Seest
Thou, knelt amongst such thoughts as these, much cause
For marvel in these smaller woes of man,
Or that the Great Eternal God hath fixed
The purple seal of Calvary upon
The charter of His universal laws,
And wills all flesh to suffer ; yea, hath willed
That suffering be the only ENTRANCE-GATE
To life eternal !

“ Mourn, we, therefore not
That human suffering *is*, but rather that it *was*,
By disobedience, *made necessity* !
But even in this Eternal MUST BE, shines,
How oft, a glory which hath made the saints
To sorrow, when at times their sufferings were
By God's indulgence lightened. Even those
Who in affliction seek not for their joy,
Have seen, when groaning 'neath some iron ill,
The iron changing into gold ; for, lo !
'Twould seem God's way, to draw from ill
A chain of light that binds the evil power,
Yet leads *offenders*, also bound, to where
(By circumstances closely veiled till then)
They're made to feel that sin is *sin indeed* !”

* * * * *

Ah, me ! in converse such our eves of long—
Aye, long, and very long ago were spent,
And then, I had my mother's side whereby

To sit on my return. Her chair is here ;
But ah, 'tis empty ! Father, too, is gone ;
And Tom !—well, Tom so loves his wife, his babes
And this and that, whereof I take no note,
That I should be a sort of hermit were
It not for Bob, who like myself is now
A white-haired bachelor, without a dream
Of ever else. Still God is good to both.
We have our thoughts, and often throw them all
Together, making such a mess of things
We cannot understand. For me, I know
My intellectual wants, and therefore walk
My greater part amongst my thoughts alone.
They sometimes seek to walk with God, and bring
Me from His love sweet tears of joy. Again
I'm down on earth, and on my way to school
With Minnie Blair, and feel so like a child
Again, I would that I might even be
A child. There's none I think can be, at times,
So happy as the man can be a child,
And weep his childhood's tears all over now
And then—aye, find them sweet, as these of mine
Seem now ; I think they've *still* the scent of flowers,
Alas—those daisies, southernwood and thyme !

But, ho ! What's here ? a letter ! Ha, I see !
From Father Martin. Well, he has not writ
Me oft of late ; I hope there 's nothing wrong !

“ Dear Bill,

“ I write a line in haste before
I go on funeral service. One beloved
By all where'er the light of her fair face
Appeared is gone to her repose. I mean
The Sister Agnes, whom you saw on one
Occasion of your visits here with Bob.

“ I'm free just now to ope a little chink,
That you may get a glimpse of secrets long
Within my keep. The penitent you saw
That day remembered Bob the Bard, when I

Saw fit to breathe his name ; and Bob, perhaps,
Will still remember one Miss FROND—'twas she !

“ She lives, and leads a virtuous life : for that
Dear Sister, who has gone to sleep, spent time
And tears to make her works complete, and did
Succeed, so far as human knowledge goes—
The rest we leave to Him who knoweth all.

“ Tell Bob, 'twas Sister Agnes sought, thro' me,
The purchase of his mother's farm. She meant
Therewith to make a present to a *once*
Dear friend! She knew him on that day : for—there,
My time is up ! Dear Bill, that holy Nun,
The Sister Agnes, once was—MINNIE BLAIR !”





National.

IRELAND : VOICES THROUGH HER SLEEP.

INSCRIBED TO THE REV. G. G——N,

DUNDEE.

[The Rev. George Gilfillan, author of the "Bards of the Bible," "Literary Portraits," &c., &c., having about the year 1864 taken a tour through Ireland, on his way visited the tomb of O'Connell, at Glasnevin. Out of reverence for the genius of the man and respect for his memory, he uncovered in its presence. The opposition Press having got hold of the incident, rated him soundly for his meanness and servility in so doing. A well-known divine in Belfast—well known at present through his prominence in Liberal politics—called upon the writer, related the matter, adding that he himself had just finished his public advocacy of the act at Glasnevin, and finally requested the writer for a few lines of verse to conclude the business. The following was the consequence.]

I.—CHARITY.

How beautiful is Love ! How wondrous sweet
To generous souls, O, Charity, is thy voice !
How Christ-like to forget the wrong for sake
Of what was right !—to make some tiny Good
Chief Porter at the pearly gate of our

Remembrance, barring all approach of what
Was ill ! How God-like to acknowledge good,
And to desire its being acknowledged ; but
How dark and dread t' ignore *all* good for sake
Of what was ill !—How like the nether woe
Is man's denial of one gift that God
Or man bestows ! We read there is a sin—
Believe we what we read ?—that may not be
Forgiven or here or elsewhere ; pause—beware !
That Holy Spirit, whose it is to shape
The mind, and sow therein such heavenly seeds
As after circumstance might reap with joy,
For human weal bestows on whom He will—
On nations even as individuals. Shall
We say, “Why did'st Thou give save unto whom
We would ?” Is earth so rich in good, or mind
Superior, that our satiated wants
Proclaiming “Hold—enough !” should us provoke
To hide in dust and rubbish 'neath our feet
What else might shine a beacon o'er the ways
Of men ? Or shall we, *gazing* on God's gift,
Declare He hath not given ? Ah, God forbid !
His pleasure made our world—would make it heaven
If we perverted not. We look upon
The ego in our hearts so closely that
We can't perceive why joy or glory should
Be passed through *any* gate but *ours*, if meant
To light *our* individual dark. Alas !
We're envious of each other ! Yet we each
Have got his proper gift which—yours and mine—
Should work salvation, not for *one* but *all* !
'Tis yours to *rule* ; 'tis mine to *serve*, or such
Reversed ; for earth must have both *head* and hands—
Her kingly minds—the hewers of her wood
And drawers of her water. Each and all,
Both guide and Gibeonite, were made in heaven !
Ah, we who work the rest, how worse than blind !
We groan beneath effects whose causes preach

Upon our fingers' ends, while we nor hear
Nor see, nor dream their fashioning rests with us !
How oft amongst our nations, as amongst
Their individuals, find we some not where
Their proper gifts were better used ! We see
The weaker brain—the coarser heart and hand
At work with those whose province 'tis to think
And feel, and lead with fingers trembling lest
They wound ; while theoretic natures, which
The *wise* call *higher*, find we moiling o'er
Our wells or hewing wood !

The hewer asks,

" Is this *my* province ? " " Yes," we say, " or Heaven
Had given thee other ! Be content ; for all
Below is ordered by His will ! " " If so,"
He answers, " whence is *sin*, which, if God's will
Alone be worked below, cannot be *sin*—
Or *sin* cannot be grievous in His sight
Or worked against His will—or, being worked,
Should not be striven against, but borne with due
Content, even, as ye say, should these, our ' ill
Adopted lots '." Better, the simple truth :
Both evils are by God's *permission*, which
Implieth not his *will*. We work ourselves
A double *bann* by sealing, with His seal,
Our maladministration of His laws !
The Slave, by *nature's* writ, *reposes* on
His chain, nor ever *hears* it clank, nor *feels*
One link upon his flesh ; and even he
Whom God designed to walk a prince among
The peers of mind, feels *lightly* on his limbs
The gyves of circumstance, what time 'tis meet,
For him and others, gyves his limbs should wear ;
But when his days of servitude are full,
His voice leaps out in freeman's tone. He feels
The god within him stir, and pant for breath
In higher air. Oh, thou who art his lord !
Talk not to him of fawning round thy knees

As theretofore ! His haughty human laugh
Will rise in thunder-mockery o'er thy voice ;
And, with it o'er the heavens, shall flee all dreams—
All recollections of the thing he was,
Save such as may abide within his soul,
To urge, to sting, and goad him to aspire !

No doubt, 'tis righteous where the chain's too strong,
To snap without *unholy* force, or where
No power of ours can *justly* aid, to teach
The awakened soul forbearance. Only then
This doctrine of *Content* can be received
As holy, true, or fit for human wants ;
But, even then, the Teacher's duty calls
Him to announce the *right* of rising o'er
A darker lot, as over sin, whene'er
The day hath come—a sacred duty, too—
To teach relentless Wrong, that every twitch
Of soul's unrest proclaims the dawn at hand !

How beautiful is Truth ! Yea, even where
Her mission is to fashion frowns, or force
The all-impartial steel of Justice from
Its sheath, the savage rudeness of her mien
Cannot conceal, from even him she wounds,
Her native loveliness. He suffers ; but,
While bowing, whatsoe'er seems harsh, he knows
Is but a veil through which he shall perceive
Her gentle beauty by-and-by. Ah, Truth !
'Tis not—not even then, when in thy most
Ungracious form, all rude of robe and stern—
In all the jewels ever Fancy wore
To make a falsehood look so fair. Nor is't
By rounding up some general sin—some breach,
Or maladministration of God's laws—
In phrase of gold, we make it or its fruits
More fair to any seeing soul. We do
But show, thereby, how large and bitter must
Have been the heart of our INJUSTICE. Nor,
By our loud-voiced denials of all worth

In nations, or their separate atoms—men,
 As individuals, shall we still the voice
 Which, from the travail of their souls shall rise
 To *our unrest*. 'Tis not by building blame
 On blame, to hide the memory of some great
 Awakener of the lands from every eye
 But Scorn's, that we can make the peoples rest
 In base belief, the gracious God designed
 Eternal Gibeonites in them. Declare
 The ill! Give honour where 'tis due, and show,
 By sympathy with what is right, a wish
 To amend the wrong. Our true confession tips
 The darkest shades of an offence with light
 As pure, as softly fair, as that upon
 The lunar rainbow's rim. So Charity
 Can wrap the trembling thing within her heart
 Of hearts.

O, Charity ! more glorious than
 The morning star ; how like the dying Christ's
 The beauty in thine eyes, when whispering low
 That Heavenly word "Forgive!" Arise—arise,
 Thou blessed pilgrim, and go forth amongst
 The tombs of every land, and teach in that
 Low, loving voice, which spake so calm and sweet
 Over the hemlock-cup and from the CROSS :
 "How beautiful is Love! How noble—yea,
 How God-like, to forget the wrong for sake
 Of what was right!" Let Him who *never* erred,
 Alone prevent thy foot, or say thee "Nay!"

II.—NAZARETH OF NATIONS.

"CAN any good come out of Nazareth?"
 Enquired the mighty ones of earth, who held
 That muscle was the larger mind. A deep
 Voiced "No!" their own reply, rang through all lands,
 As if a door had clashed in *Doom*. It struck

An echo from each sea and shore, which, like
The surge that finds some starry cave along
The ocean's rim, rolled into Erin's soul,
Where, low and lone, she sat and wept, and there
It dwelt—slaying all hope to do, or be !

“ Can any good come out of Nazareth ? ”
That Nazareth of the nations asked her own
Sad self. A shiver of her heart alone
Replied ! Poor land ! Even by her own she had ;
Been taught to feel herself a step-child, when
Her sisters raised their voices to the Lord,
And called Him “ Father ! ” humbly wrapt within
The thick, dark sense of self-imputed wants,
Or nothingness, as 'twere a poisoned robe,
Beneath her sisters' feet she laid her down,
And, o'er the silent black of heaven, essayed,
With tearful gaze, to watch the coming beams
Of some—all-real, though *unlikely* star.
Ah, many came and passed ; but she—she wist
Not, through her unbelief !

She dreamt, and, lo !

A light gushed o'er the dark. Therewith, too, came
A sound—the sound of many voices ! She
Awoke. Behold, amongst her sons, stood one,
As 'twere a moon amongst her stars ! She saw
His face—she heard his voice ; she thought—she *felt*
The man was great. Enough ! Why ask the sun,
So broad, so warm, whether his *all* were good !

III.—GREATNESS.

WHAT word, through all the language of mankind,
Hath such a wonder-working sound, or claims
Or wins such large amount of human love
And worship, wrong and right, as *Greatness* ? Why,
We wed the word to worth of every cut
And hue ; and, *strange* enough, it fits itself

Or, rather, we adopt it, unto gifts
 Of *Vileness*, in their million forms, as well !
 This hour, a hydra-headed Ill—the next,
 An angel with a crown of stars, it stands,
 And claims the worship which we yield upon
 Our knees ; and, not because we *know*, in truth,
 The thing to be an angel ; but because
 The general voice—a most unquestioning one,
 At times—has wedded it with powers which suit
 Our varying whims, or moment-lived conceits.
 Hence, what to-day we *crown*, to-morrow shall
 We *crucify*, if mood and time cry “slay !”

Meanwhile, the Greatness worshipped, may itself
 Have undergone no change beyond the forms
 Which slept in undeveloped being, when
 It *first* our gaze attracted—when *we first*
 Our wild, unreasoning worship gave, and felt
 The gift too small !

Alas, *my* Great-in-good—
 The star-crowned angel in *my* world of Thought
 May be my neighbours hydra-headed Ill !
 So, minds are made to differ ; but—what then ?
 All Greatness is of God ! Whatever stands
 An inch above the standard of the crowd
 Was meant by Him to be *nutritious*, sweet
 And wholesome, to extent vouchsafed, or, charged
 With some medicinal bitter, needful where
 Its form and power appear !

Ah, many things
 Of abject littleness, do we, in dearth
 Of thought or words—perhaps in dearth of both !—
 Most falsely dignify with that word **GREAT** !
 I would that all the nomenclatures known
 Might find for every race, and *class* of Good
 Or Ill, some name or names that might no more
 Deceive these most unreasoning whims of ours—
 That Greatness, oft so misapplied, would fit
 As 'twere, a dove-tailed *truth*, expressly shaped

For all receiving points within the soul
That knows no guile—the God-like soul alone!—
The master-work of Heaven!

Immortal soul!

Oh, what below is Great but thee—and thou
Art truly Great but when thine all is good!

However meanly set the jewel, still
A *jewel* is—as such, would manifest
Its lustre through a sea of mire; yea, even
The Soul of Wickedness itself doth, from
Its being *soul*, emit a splendour which,
Through all its gulfs of guilt, attests its high
Degree!—Ay, wins the *worship* of its kind—
The worship of the purblind Good as well!

Immortal Soul! however rude of robe
Material, unto thee alone of all
God's works below, 'twas given to *know* thy God,
And keep thee pleasant in His eyes! Herein
Dost thou possess a greatness, passing wealth—
Beyond the grasp of thrones to give—the stretch
Of Schools to value; yea, surpassing far—
However thrones and schools may doubt or sneer—
The teeming veins of Earth's auriferous heart,
Or diamond mines, with all their soulless blaze!
'Tis well, my soul, that thou this truth should know—
Yet, knowing such, thou dost, perhaps, but know
A truth 'twere better *not* to know, unless
Thou to thy knowledge add, that whatsoe'er
Thy weight of intellectual ore, thou canst
Be great but when thou'rt good—hast only *wealth*
When what thou hast is used to clear thine eyes
To clearly see the ills below, such wealth
Or power was given to redress!

Ah, Soul!

'Tis only looking up to Him who gave;
'Tis only when thy yearning wings are dipt
And splendoured in that one Eternal Fount,
Whose living waves scatter their spray—the seed

Of Worlds!—o'er all the vasts of space, thou shalt Possess that Greatness, known as good, indeed!

Beware, then, how thou walk'st! Not looking up, Behold, thou walk'st, with whatso' wealth was given, As 'twere a parricidal sword's point turned Against the generous Giver, working ill— To *thee*, an ill indeed—to others? Well, Whatever God permit! No ill *is ill* To *me*, but that which mine own hand creates! My neighbour's act *may* wear the ugly name, And *earn* its *need*—may yield me *pain* or *grief*, Which, after all, may be the fruit of Joy, Like other fruit oft *bitter* when *unripe*! Such, be it mine, with resignation meet— More smiles than tears!—at all times to accept, This truth my stay—the great-in-evil holds His power from God, as well as he who, with The wand of pure endeavour, changed his gift Of *five* bare talents into *ten*, as flashed The lesson from the Saviour's lips! But Earth Some sluggard's talent hides to-day as close As ever. Hence, our greatest Great are *men*— No more; and oft are great from this poor fact Alone, that all around are *small*. 'Tis true, The diamond hath another side which shows, Howe'er the *Great* contain the *small*, the *small* Can ne'er contain the *Great*! How, therefore, shall The *Great* *reveal* its greatness to the *small*?— The eye which can't perceive—the soul which can't Contain? 'Tis truth, alas, too oft, too clear, The great alone can give the great their due!

IV.—HER STAR.

The Nazareth of the nations looked upon Her star, and, lo its disc had breadthened; yea, The silvery face of dawn looked on her from

The hills. Her eyes were opened, and her tears
 Became like diamonds to the gaze of men
 Who scanned them through the glory of that star !
 Ah, if from long, long years of darkness, she
 Arose, and, having seen its light, bowed down
 And worshipped, why should they, whose years are one
 Eternal splendour, blame, but pity not ?

Her Son was great, and had a *charmer's* voice !
 He spake, and, from the weeper's soul won forth
 That viper 'No !' which, coiled around each hope,
 Had negatived all power. The man was great :
 He touched the nation's pulses and desires,
 And stayed, or drove them, whithersoe'er he would !
 He caught the human heart, and, like a skilled
 Musician, smote from every chord a song
 To suit his nature's psalmody, as well
 As time's requirements. Smiting so, he filled
 The Irish heavens with melodies which might
 Have been divine, but for his large and more
 Immediate need. His own, and Ireland's *not*
 The world's, his music lacked that *grander* breadth
 Of tone which, pealing high o'er race and creed,
 Sweeps out, and, like the winds of heaven, becomes
 An anthem o'er the altar of mankind !

The weeper felt his power and *bowed*—anon,
 She felt her *own* ; and, when she felt, AROSE !

V.—DISCORDANT ECHOES.

The strangest spirit of the times that be
 Is one that rolls upon a serpent's tongue—
 Through all the green saliva of the kind
 The sacred name of Love—then, breathes the word,
 Impregnate, on the universal air,
 With venom'd hate of every good and ill,
 Alike, save that, or *good* or *ill*, which may,
 Somehow, be shaped to self's account. But, still,

Defiant of the foe, the world's great heart
 Seems breadthening in her breast ; and, oft some voice,
 From some undreamt of watch-tower on the line
 Of mind's advance, is heard to cry aloud,
 " Make way, and give the World's big heart more room !
 And, here and there, some wild pulsation tells
 More room *is* being made—that, here and there,
 The heart of Christian Love *has* room secured,
 And struggles fierce for more ! Hence, from the east
 And west, and north and south, at intervals,
 Arise soft voices, whispering, in wild joy,
 ' Lo, God is everywhere ! and not in *this*
 Or *that*, alone—and not with them or those,
 Or even *ourselves*, to detriment of all.
 Who have not looked through our peculiar lens !
 Yea, God is spirit, therefore bound to no
 Particular place, however fair our faith
 Or fancy may presume is such, or such !—
 Is spirit, and as truly recognised
 And worshipped, too, may be in putting down
 A foot as lifting up a praying hand !'
 God speed such voices, for the World hath need !

The name once loved had died on Ireland's ear ;
 But, even in time, what's good may rise again !
 ' Ah ! ' saith the grim detractor, born of sect
 And party, ' nothing here was good ! '

Out—out,
 Defamers ! man, where even true, but metes
 His fellow by the line he finds within
 Himself ; while all beyond that measure's length
 To him who measures, seems a void—a blank
 Whereon, with cold presuming hand, he writes
 That heartless word ' Pretension ! ' Out ye, false
 Or narrow-brained denouncers of the great,
 Whose souls have dazed you with their lustrous depths ;
 For night and night's Gethsemane have passed
 A Saviour through their gates—a Saviour born

Of Love for universal being—even
A God and man-embracing CHARITY !
With Faith, the cloven-tongued she stands upon
The mountains in the isles beyond the sea,
And, looking hitherward, says ‘ a great man lived
In yon poor bleeding land ! ’ The cities, o'er
The plains, take up the tale, and answer back :
‘ Behold, the dark twin spirits, apathy
And prejudice, to whose disastrous keep,
Too oft we gave the great ones of our kind,
Have shrunk—are fallen beneath a single voice ;
Yea, even as falls the world-bestriding night
Beneath the silvery lance of dawn ; for lo !
A great man lives, whose large-souled reverence o'er
That lone Glasnevin dust, proclaims—may long
Proclaim, through blind and unbelieving years—
Yon Nazareth of the nations nursed a man,
And in her most unfruitful days—a man,
Who, verily, was great ! ’

‘ Yea ! ’ saith the Fraud

Of serpent's tongue and green-eyed Piety,
‘ Was great in evil-speaking of whate'er
Presented rightful bar to his advance
In wrong ! ambitious, *mercenary*, mean,
With cunning, meant for wisdom, quarried he
Amongst the fiery hates of race and creed—
Ay deep as doom could dig, for ashlars hot
And venom'd, to his wish, whereof to build
The altar he desired—whereon, to him,
The rabble-rout might offer sacrifice ! ’
Alas—alas ! poor human nature, Christ,
Himself, by thee, was even more maligned ! ”

IV.—APOLOGETIC.

Where lived, or liveth he—as CONSCIOUS POWER—
So perfect in his walk as ne'er to strike

A wilful foot against some gilded wrong,
Where such, in *his* belief, stood forth to choke
The common pathway of his tribe with thorns ?

The figurative command, " When smitten, turn
The other cheek ! " is seldom quoted, save
By him who smites. The man who fronts us here
Was merely human—loved his own, perhaps,
A faint degree too well. Therein, his mere
Humanity its thinnest covering wore.
The children of his race and creed, to him,
Were more than all the world besides. He saw
The thorns that choked their way to eminence—
That choked their way to *common rights*, as well ;
He felt the might, *within*, to cast them thence,
If but the might, *without*, that spent its strength
In wail or bickerings, lent its force to place
Him where his *might* could act, and stay his arm
Right up, against the pressure of the times !
To win the aid of those he sought to *serve*,
Alas ! he needs must bow before the Foe
That apes the mien of " OURS !" Alas ! we won't
Believe a Patriot *true* to what may be
Our views, unless he mouthe them, set in phrase
To suit the harshness of our times ! We're not
Attuned to silly rhapsodies of what
Some weaker moments name forbearing Love,
Or universal Brotherhood. The wrongs
We *know* of mostly mayn't at all be wronged
By so-called Christian mildness. Zeal demands
Its rightful due from yours and yours, or race
Or *creed*, from all but " OURS, alas ! the *one*
Great sufferer from ye all ! "

The course pursued—
The means employed—to win and *hold* the power ;
To work the weal proposed, were but, perhaps,
Of dubious good—were not the *very* best
A *very* wise philanthropy had chose ;
But here no *choice* could be. The means at hand,

Or dark or bright, could be but what they were !
This war of Ours, alas !

“ Ah, men, 'tis worse
Than sad !”—saith some rude-tongued believer in
The incarnate love of Calvary—“ to note
Some otherwise noble soul shut up within
The narrow nut-shell of his *own*, look thence
And see *no* beauty shine o'er all his race
But those enshelled with him ! Your churches, even,
However so far apart, be not *so* far
But that the Saviour's hand may cover *all*
In love ! Behold the many fruitful fields
Beneath the farmer's gaze ! *This yieldeth wheat* ;
That yieldeth barley ; *yon*, its *rye* ; the *rest*,
As seems him right. The fruits may differ much ;
But, lo ! that husbandman shall each make serve
His end ! And shall the one great HUSBANDMAN,
Who husbands all, when comes his ‘ harvest home ’,
Not know to purge and profit by His grain ?
Not know whereon to show, to *shower* His more
ABOUNDING LOVE ?”

Oh, silly preacher, go !
O, Deist—Papist ! wherefore quench thou thus
That grand eternal stream of righteous wrath
From this all-holy Ego in our souls !
If thou, indeed, believest in thy God,
And hast from Him received some gift or grace,
Beyond the common share, go, get thee, make
Hereof some goodly bigot's tool to shape
And barb dissensions for our sects ; else thou
Shalt walk our midst a branded thing, whereon
Earth's pugilistic piety shall ring
Its sacred buffets for all time ! But if,
Indeed, thou promptest well, our pious hates
Behold, the children of that tribe for whom
Thou playest prompter—please, thou mark us well !—
Shall pay a royal heed, and see that thou
Receive thy *meet reward*—*so meet*, they may

Not deem it praiseful *much* to overload
 Thee *during life* with wealth or honours, but
 Thy large desserts shall surely not escape
 Their grateful ken, nor lack their generous meed
 In *rightful* time ! This means, be pleased to note,
 That o'er thy doubtless, *glorying dust*, when such
 Thou hast become, few moons shall weep till those
 The dear recipients of thine aidful love,
 With fitting pomp shall gratefully suspend—
 As over him, once KING of Irish hearts !—
 The crown of their—hem !—ha !—FORGETFULNESS !

VII.—GRATITUDE.

Alas, poor human nature, born of dust,
 What marvel thou art frail !—Less strange, it seems
 That thou should'st err, than that thou should'st be found
 E'er dreaming of the right. A motly thing
 Art thou, so mixed of *good*, as if by *chance*,
 And *ill*, as by *necessity*, of whom
 And whose it may be sorrowfully said :
 The man who ne'er gave cause for sighs hath made
 But few to smile !

Who doeth *ill* and saith,
 ‘The thing is bad !’ hath ta’en away a sting
 From his offence ; who doeth *ill* and saith,
 ‘The thing is good !’ hath added many stings
 Thereto. Whoso’ receiveth gifts, and saith
 By word or deed, ‘Thou gavest me nought !’ shall find
 Such gift a fiery serpent coiled around
 His heart when in his sorest need. Whoe'er
 Bestoweth gifts and inly saith, ‘behold,
 With these I buy a *future slave* !’ shall find
 Instead an ASP to wound his pride. Whoe'er
 Bestoweth gifts to win him gratitude
 Alone, and not to find within the act
 Itself his ample recompense, shall, like
 The barren womb, remain unsatisfied—
 Shall ne'er receive of gratitude his fill—

Shall live and die, alas, a martyr to
His own too warm!—too large! and all misplaced
Benevolence—sufferer from a sin against
His love, the deadliest known—*that sin*, in whose
Dark presence, as his philanthropic tongue,
Avers, the sin of witchcraft waxeth white!

No doubt, *true* gratitudes are few—almost
As few and *small* as true philanthropies!
But *one* there is—one *class* of gratitudes
Which for proportions, pigmy, bears the palm.
“Tell me ye knowing and discerning few,”
Why is’t, of all the so-called gratitudes
There be, the most inactive is the kind
Hath many hands? A great man’s name, how oft
With gifts that make lands great, it comes—is used
And fades from our remembrance! Ah, this thing
Called PUBLIC GRATITUDE—’tis leaner far
Than Pharaoh’s kine! The recollecting power—
Say of the general mind—too oft, perhaps,
Of individual, too—retains how oft
With iron clutch whate’er is *dark* amongst
Our fellow-mortal’s deeds, while suff’ring all
To pass the bright and fair, however far
They may outnumber, yea, and in degree
Of quality, surpass the dingier deeds.
O, noble public—thou for whose lone weal
So many noble hearts have bled, since first
Thy craving voice smote from the iron times
Their rusty clamour—wherefore is’t that this,
Man’s noblest attribute, when called upon,
In thee a palsied cripple still hath feigned
Itself—yea more, that thou hast hugged what *seemed*
Its lameness like a joy? Ah, not for that
It palsied *was* or lame, but that, alas!
Thy parsimonious heart did *palsy strike*
Thy hands. The need an aggregate should yield,
In that, ’tis for the *aggregate*, indeed
Exempts the *individual* who perceives

He cant be grateful without loss ; but feels
 His neighbour *can* and *will*. For *him* he'll *jouk*
 Amongst the crowd *unmissed* ; and resting there—
 Because this *neighbour's* cautious as himself—
 So rest and die their quiet deaths, the bulk
 Of public gratitudes ! 'Tis prudent then
 In us—as it behoves a public still
 To be regarding *self*—to smoothe their graves
 With fingers on our lips ; 'tis decent ! Then
 We have it all so pleasurabley cheap !
 Thence forth the great man's name wriggles the mouth
 As though 'twere something tasted badly, thence
 Should some fool-generous conscience find a voice—
 Loquacious over-much and say, "We've *wronged*
 The dead!" What then ? We know our course : look out,
 We knew the man ! We've but to turn to where
 He thought and wrought, and from his buried deeds
 Drag something forth, which, all however fair
 And healthy when in active life, must now
 Beneath the decomposing touch of time
 And tomb, have putrid airs enough to form
 What *seems* a cause to justify neglect—
 A cause to justify neglect ? Alas !
 How steadily he walks, who, when we will
 To find it, leaves no mark a-wry ! So then
 Such cause is so much easier caught than coin—
 Its currency as free, we seize it all
 Too oft, and having daubed it dark as self
 Could wish, with pious indignation fix
 The guileful guilt before the crowd, and close
 Our coffers with the dead man's worthlessness !
 Alas, to lie of man a paltry sin
 May be ; but he who lies of God, or His
 True gifts, is somewhat eagle-souled in crime !

VIII.—BIGOTRY.

"Can any good come out of Nazareth ? "

Still sneering asks the dagger pen of some
Excludo, bound and blindfold in the chains
Of bileful will, within the narrow walls
Of his peculiar party, sect, or caste !

O, Ireland—Ireland, banned with frequent bann,
But most with that which makes the name of Christ
Distorted by the shibboleths of sects,
Become a leper's cry that holds apart
Believers in the ONE All-Holy Name—
That separates thy sons, as men without
A common country—men to whom the words
“ A nation's honour”—holiest sounds that men
Can breathe of things below !—are words devoid
Of meaning ; sounds which, if at times, they seem
To ring with something sanity might bless,
'Tis all so “ hemmed ” and “ ha-aed”—so husked and
jagged,
With mysteries shibbolethic, that, to thee,
Poor Ireland, yields it only evil ; for meant
To suit alone the auditual sense of some
Small party trained in cabalistic sounds,
It rings but disaffection o'er the whole !

IX.—POVERTY AND PRIDE.

“ Can any good come out of Nazareth ? ”
Still ask the envenomed pens of heartless scribes
Who pore o'er proofs of gifted mind, as pores
The painted savage o'er the plant from whose
Rich veins he seeks a poison for his shaft !
“ No good ! ” the parsimonious party slave
Replies. How sad—Ah, is't not *base*?—to sneer
Away some gifted soul's repute—deserts—
And stamp “ Lack-brain ” upon a country's brow,
That men may sanctify some foul neglect,
Or falsely *prove* the nothingness of some
Opposing sect or party or—*more base* !—

That some may hide the *Scrip-love* of their souls !
 O, HUMAN NATURE, blamed with frequent blame—
 How oft with that of being *poor* and *proud* ;
 Too poor to give for living worth or dead ;
 Too sage to say thy duty points not so ;
 Too proud too admit thou canst not give, and hence
 So mean as to ignore so oft, thy hearts
 Divinely gifted, save they'd throbbed beneath
 Some robe so richly braided as to need
 No tinsellings from thee ! Alas—alas !
 Why not too proud to *seem* so low—so vile ?
 To seem so Heaven-disdained—so pauper-like
 In heart and head—Gabaonite, indeed ?
 Oh, would that I could write upon the winds—
 That I could grave upon the tremulous white
 Of yon world-witnessed sun, that every eye
 Might read the mystery of this bitter wrong—
 This deep deceit to native mind—to that
 Which self-respect alone should nurse and guard !

X.—PATRONAGE.

Ah, Private hand, or Public voice, 'tis not
 That patronage is sweet, that thus, in thee,
 Or thee, its tardy grant or utter want
 Is wailed ! 'Tis God-like to acknowledge good,
 And to desire its being acknowledged. 'Tis
 The lack of heart and truth, the truest forms
 Of gratitude, we mourn. The kind intent
 Is still the *better gold* ! The gift itself
 Is dross, whose only beauty lies in that:
 It is the outward form of *feelings* which
 Adopt it as their native mode of speech
 And deed. That patronage is sweet—Ah, SWEET !
 Alas ! a draught more bitter seldom cools
 The fiery lips than that same golden cup—
Bitter when sweetest—cold from warmest hand—

Loquacious as a market bell—*Why not?*—
When even most nobly silent. Ah, to ears
So delicately attuned as his—poor, proud
Recipient—every touch and tinkle, felt
Or heard, proceeding from the jewels on
That hand—a hand to him, perhaps, outstretched
With gentlest kindness—delicacy touched
As oft to tears—but seems to tell both deed
And need to sun and moon—to every star
In Heaven—to every worm on earth; while, ah,
Within his soul he ever hears the cry:
“ Shall evil have a voice on earth, and not
This good? The very winds should shout it, where
They flee 'mongst squares and steeples; ay, and through
The lanes—yea, **SHOULD!** Indigent *crime* to point
And say—“ There goes the creature who —” My soul!
My soul!—the birds that flee from tree to tree—
The very trees themselves shall talk and tell
How very mean and low has “ He” become!

And then he thinks of far away, and out
Amongst the glorious hills—sweet heavens—those hills!
And of the days he thinks when first he felt
How glorious they were—yea felt, as 'twere
The God of all the worlds within him—felt
Himself a *man* and cared for by his Lord
To do some work to serve his fellow-man!
And then he sees his fellow's haughty glance—
And *still* yon dingy pointing finger—hears
The husky “ Pooh! a — ” no, the word in even
The slender voice of Fancy would distract
To—*Folly!* Then, ay, then, he hears the knell
Of that which, more than all Heaven's gifts, he hugged
Within his core—the independent mind!
Ah, Heaven, *Thou* knowest if sweet, it surely *is*
A bitter—*bitter* sweet this cup of gold—
This charitable or well-meant cup which men
With kindlier tongues call **PATRONAGE!** But though
The *living* lip may quiver while it tastes,

Fair gifts are grateful o'er a GRAVE ; and still
 The fairest is the gift of reverent thoughts.
 We nurse and give them voice while bending o'er
 The humblest human earth—wherefore withhold
 Them from our GREAT ? For me, I worshipped Dan,
 As DAN, perhaps, did NAPHTALI ; but still
 Had reverence for that power he held from God !

XI.—GLASNEVIN.

Glasnevin's name, upon the Irish ear,
 Had ceased to keep the promise of its power—
 A power which, in the morn of Ireland's grief,
 Oft, like the rod of Moses, smote upon
 The rockier Irish heart, and forced therefrom
 The marah-stream of its sublimest woe !
 But, lo, on other ears than thine, O isle,
 Whose weak remembering powers are here thy shame,
 That name, made sacred by a great man's dust,
 Hath still a power producing reverent mien !

'Twas even-tide. A lonely whisper crept
 Along the still, dead air that thickened round
 The great man's tomb—curdling it into sound.
 A great man stood before that silent home,
 And bared his noble brow, and bowed ; for lo !
 That angel whom the Lord appoints to nurse
 Fair visions on the night of tribes who feel
 The fragments of their shattered hopes, still prick
 Their souls to madness, while they sleep and dream
 Upon the deadly opiates of despair,
 Spake to his spirit's ear, what all should know—
 What every *stone*, in that Glasnevin tomb,
 With all a storm-cloud's power of silent speech,
 Should Ireland teach to tell to all who gaze :

HAU, VIATOR ! HIC DORMIT HIBERNIA !

No, Fellow-follower, in those flowery forms
 Of Faith, that nineteen *with'ring* centuries, through,

Still shed, where'er they show their wondrous light,
The healing scents of Calvary's wondrous Love :
There, bowed before *his* dust whom Ireland named—
Nor *emptily* so !—her LIBERATOR ! but
A child of Scotia's IRON COVENANT—
That Covenant which, in other days, arose,
And in its zeal to clear the garden, named
Of God, of what, to *some*, seemed gaudier weeds,
Was not, 'tis said, too tender 'mongst the flowers !

Such was the man—with all the Covenant's zeal
For Faith ; but that made *Christlier* by the love
Of kind ! no blind, sectarian devotee
To slay or worship, o'er some point of faith,
As though 'twere something man could shape by sleight—
Of-hand ! Such was the man who bowed, as I,
Perhaps, should *not* have bowed ; but who, thereby
Revealed himself the value of that act,
At *least*, my *better*—all things else aside !
Such the man—the *man* ! who was he ? Hark !
Stern Scotia's golden-tongued divine—amongst
The first prose bards, if not, himself, the first
In richly-lettered Britain ! Few so fit
To see the *Seer*, or sacred or profane ;
To find the larger soul, howe'er concealed
By *smallness* of the flesh ! Yea, few so fit
To search our idiosyncrasies, and seal
And separate the better from the worse,
Of mind's conflicting parts, as he who pierced,
With such a flowery wealth of minstrel-ken,
Your solemn strains, O BIBLE BARDS ! those heights
And depths, and varying powers of storm, which wrap
Such glory round the Hebrew-harp of God !
Oh, for a tongue to thank him as we ought,
My soul, in language, like his own free verse,
Rich as the fleece upon our soft-blue heavens,
By Artist Evening touched to curdled gold !

All, save our *Sin* is less or more of God !
We wail o'er evil—what *is* evil ? What

Is *much* not pleasant to the taste ? Some sense
Is pained—some sickly good made whole ! For me,
My light declares all earthly ill works out
Some heavenly weal—'tis but, itself, the husk
Which sheathes, till ripening time, the kernel 'Good.'

All, save our *Sin*, is less or more akin
To God ; but souls that rise above the crowd
Are more akin to each, while in the Lord,
Than those that breathe a lower air. Ah, hence,
The great alone, can give the great their due !

O, be thou bless'd, God willing, Scotia, till
In love of kind, thy soul expand and shed,
As this thy son's, its diamond wealth o'er all
Maligned as we ! All gracious Heaven, bless Thou
The Good of every land, and give them power,
Amongst the scorpions of their kind, to walk
Unhurt ; and when at last they fall asleep
In HOPE, whate'er the form of faith, whereby
Thy sought TRUTH's face, O, grant, sweet Heaven, some
gleam
Of CHRISTIAN CHARITY, like thine, DUNDEE,
Which, trembling o'er their else-forgotten dust,
May clothe their frailties in its own white beams
And woo our holiest requiems to their tombs !





IRELAND'S WARNING.

Air—“Tow-row-row.”

The melody which we have here attempted to provide with popular words is an Irish quickstep of the first water—of a thoroughly martial or combatant character. In its bold, brief, and abrupt gushes of passion one can almost fancy that he *sees*, as well as hears, the interchange of angry menace and hostile action. It possesses withal a happily rollicking tone—a truly Irish spirit, as Irish spirit used to be—a fight for fun, as it were; and, through even its most stormy passages, a dash of genuine heart. In short, it is *Irish*; and, as was once pithily observed of it by an eminent songster—“In the hands of a Moore it might have become the National Anthem.” Its great popularity, in the absence of popular words, while testifying to the intrinsic value of the melody, might almost be considered as sufficient proof of music’s having been among the first-born of passionate utterances—the elder sister of verse—a power existing prior to that of thought reduced to words or rhythmical sentences.

The phrase “Touch me not” has, in Ireland, in addition to the ordinary English signification of the words, another meaning—viz., a *None-such*. In this second sense it may be regarded as the *nonpareil* of the French run through an Anglo-Irish idiosyncrasy—Eg. Gr., HE’S A TOUCH-ME-NOT—viz., a *None-such*.

IRELAND's hills are gusty gray—
Ireland's glens are Europe's EDEN!—
Ireland, in her every day,
Gentle is as gentlest maiden;
But, once hot,
Never was the spot
Glance could say with better breedin'
“ Touch me not ! ”

Ulster, todlin' but and ben,
Croons “ I've weans, the cannie Callans,
Richt aul' farrant Irishmen,
With Irish thochts in guid braid Lallans ;

Weel I wot,
They can pay my shot,
Coup a tyke, or test a balance—
Touch me not ! ”

MUNSTER's girls, her care and keep !
May they, hill and glen adorning,
Radiant as the streams that leap
Down the ruddy slopes of morning,
Bless each cot
Ever with its lot
Of five-feet-twelves—sing IRELAND's warning,
“ Touch me not ! ”

Leinster, with a tearful smile—
Bluff at times as April weather ! —
Glancing o'er this glorious isle
Asks each bungling bouchal whether
Such a spot—
Arrah, *catch her that !*—
Might not rate, were hearts together,
Touch me not !
Connaught knows, by crag and copse,
Whose they're there, should Erin need 'em ;
War—the IRON key that opes
The GOLDEN gates of Peace and Freedom ! —
If our lot,
From her every cot
Brands would flash where all might read 'em,
“ Touch me not ! ”

Ireland ! Ireland ! Irishmen !
Up a golden future mount we !
Shall we, then, o'er hill and glen,
Blest with Heaven's so sovereign bounty,
Droop and rot
Where, removed some blot,
Ring might every town and county—
“ Touch me not ! ”

THE COUNTY DOWN.

Air—"The Downshire Quickstep."

The noble melody to which the following lines have been written—a melody which for vigour and breadth of tone might breathe a soul into the charge of a Balaklava, and which, for the last half century at least, has been doing duty as a "Figure reel" in every barn in Ulster—has, so far as the present writer is aware, nothing whatever connected with it in the form of readable words. It is sometimes known by the name of *Ireland Farewell*, which words he has frequently heard as the close of a refrain—probably that of a street ballad, as it exhibited the usual contempt of that class for both Locke and Lindley Murray. If there be any, therefore, unable to recognise it by the proper name, or at least that by which it is most generally known as given above, they may know it by what we shall call the spurious one—*Ireland Farewell*.

God bless the hills, the IRISH hills,
 Where harvests ripen in the clouds !
 God bless the swarthy hand that tills
 To feed the city's sweltering crowds.
 Keep self-honoured,
 As old Slieve Donard,
 Shaken as soon by the far world's frown,
 The tall food-growers
 Where the big blast lowers
 At "Hurra for the men of the County Down !"

God bless the ploughs and those who walk
 Elisha-like behind the team ;
 Bless rack and coulter, beam and sock ;
 For labour's an all-holy theme !
 Bless each furrow
 That, like an arrow,
 Gleams in the wealth of its new-born brown,
 Till green points showing
 Where the new bread's growing,
 We "Hurra for the ploughs of the County Down."

God bless the sickles and the sheaves,
 The brawny reaper's sturdy air !
 God bless the light of Autumn eves
 Along the maiden's loosened hair !

Where, leaves rustling,
 She flies a-bustling
 Under their clouds of the golden brown,
 While some good fellow
 From his stocks right yellow
 Sings " Hurra for the girls of the County Down ! "

God bless the girls of County Down,
 With many a merry BOON and CHURN !
 God bless their wooers, stark and brown,
 From Cranfield Point to Crawfordsburn !
 Make wives mothers,
 And men like brothers,
 High as the heavens o'er the clod or clown,
 Who the ass can't bury
 With a " Hip-hip-hurry ! "
 At " Hurra for the homes of the County Down ! "

The County Down—the County Down—
 God bless the hills of County Down !
 May their every hamlet rise a town
 O'er iron crag and heather brown !
 Hale and hearty
 May creed and party
 Mingling their souls every difference drown,
 Like right good fellows,
 Till the world's heart mellows
 At " Hurra for the hills of the County Down ! "



TURN YOUR MONEY.

There is a saying amongst the youngsters of both sexes in some parts of Ireland that when gazing on the new moon for the first time after her change, if you put your hand in your pocket and make a movement in whatever coin may be there at the time, you will not be without money till the moon changes again. This movement is called "Turning your money." The writer is of opinion that this saying—we can hardly call it a superstition—is chiefly confined to localities that, where not purely native, have had an English colonization. He has not met with it in Scottish districts. It is to be supposed there is not much faith placed in the

saying, though one is to come at the supposition, rather from the facility there is for putting said saying to the test, than from any want of attention to the time and the performance it suggests. It is not improbable that the young Irish girl has frequently some motive other than merely turning her money when she slips out under the new moon; say for that purpose, as she slyly insinuates. But as that is the only reason she is in the habit of giving to the merely looker-on, he is not warranted in pressing the matter.

OH ! the corn was colouring down the vale,
 And the stooks stood on the hill ;
 But an early pickle had got the flail
 For a grain to try the mill ;
 And as Johnny thrashed, I had shaked the straw,
 With a laugh the whole day long ;
 For his flail sang a " Pit-pat" —he, " Ha, ha !"
 Through the burden of this song :

" Come, turn your money while the moon first shows,
 And you'll never want money till that same moon goes !"

To milk in the byre we had begun,
 For the grass was getting bare ;
 And a knowin' of ice the pond upon
 As the early duck got there ;
 And again on my milkin' stool I laughed,
 Till the piggan jauped my knee ;
 For I knew who it was along the croft
 That sang clear as clear could be :

" Come, turn your money in the new moon's ray,
 And you'll never want money till that moon's away !"

Oh ! my father puffed with his inch o' clay
 Thro' the woodbines round the door ;
 While I to the hillstocks slipt away,
 For the new moon's sake—you're sure !—
 And above she sailed like a silver thread,
 Or a broken bridal ring ;
 But was it her beauty was in my head,
 Or was it the moon did sing ?

" Come, turn your money to the moon's first stain,
 And you'll never want money till she's changed again !"

Oh ! the thrasher's voice, and the thrasher's tune,
 Heaven bless the twain, say I !
 And that clear, cool eve, with its harvest moon,
 At her first dip in the sky !
 Did I frown while an arm stole round my neck,
 And a soft voice on my ear ?
 Oh ! never was a maiden's future black
 When a heart spoke out so clear :
 " Come, turn your money while the moon first shows,
 And you'll, maybe, be a wife ere that same moon goes ! "



WILLIE'S MOTHER.

Air—"Youghal Harbour."

It is almost unnecessary, so far as Irish readers are concerned, to say a word respecting the air known as *Youghal Harbour*. From Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway it is as common in every cabin as the air that enters the door. It appears to have been peculiarly a melody of the people. Hot from the heart, it teems with a most bitter grief—not an artfully constructed sorrow or wail, but a simple voice, low and tremulous, mingled with genuine tears—such tears, too!—scalding, stealthy, yet impulsive, as flow but rarely, perhaps, from other than genuinely Celtic natures.

An' so yer moment has come for sailin'—
 A bitther moment, O, Willie, dear !
 But where's the use ov yer mother's wailin',
 There's nothin', darlin', to houl' ye here ?
 There's little labour that's worth the doin',
 An' happy are they can rise an' go—
 The poor oul' countrry has gone to ruin,
 But, och, it's hard, man, to lave her so !

The patch o' groun' that we've still the pride in,
 Is but a *patch*, dear, when all is done ;
 An' the coul' bare walls, that yer father died in,
 Can barely aqual the wants of one ;
 'Tis thtrue that Jemmie, yer slavin' brother,
 Has still a home, there, however low ;

But, when he shares wi' yer poor oul' mother,
Ochone, there's little to come or go !

But time is passin'—O, Willie, Willie !
An' I, dear help me, what *can* I say ?
Ough ! *you'll* be kin' to that weepin' lily
That's lavin' all for yerself th' day !
An' whither, jewel, ye sweat an' swelther,
Or roul, a prince, through yer marvel halls,
Ye won't forget, man, the poor oul' shilther,
Or her who rocked ye within its walls !

From that big brow, then, my yellow yarlin',
One curlin' sunbame to faste my eye !
An' when they've waked me, my Willie, darlin',
I'll take it with me to where I'll lie—
To where I'll lie ; but, for that last lyin'
Though God's sthrong angels should come an' care,
Who'd kiss the coul' lips ov her a-dyin'
Like him, achora, who can't be there ?

Don't kill yer mother with axin' pardon—
Is't you—my snow-flake—my spotless chil' !
Ough ! coul' wide worl', yer his pratie-garden,
Who never grieved me with gloom or guile !
One kiss—the last one ! Ah, God, mavourneen,
How like, this moment, the face that's gone !
Yer father's, dear, at yer every turnin'—
Yer father's eyes, an' yer father's han' !

A moment, Willie !—I'm feeling wakely—
I'll lane a thrifle upon yer arm ;
God help them, dear, that be oul' an' sickly—
They need the han' that's both thtrue and warm
For what yer own was, the Lord reward ye,
An' be your keeper, both night an' day ;
May all the angels in Heaven guard ye !
Now—lave me, jewel !—away—away !

SWEETHEART, O, MY COW.

Air—"Noch Bonin Shin Doe."

I HAD a wee cow once, a credit for beauty—

An' often I herded her out by the Conn,*

Where every one wondered to see my white Tooty—

Her hoofs so like gold, an' her coat like the swan !

As white as the swan, an' as shinin' as silk ;

An', och, it was she gave the lashins o' milk :

But—sure I may say it, it's long ago now—

There were'nt so many like me an' my cow !

I loved my wee cow every day all the dearer,

An' would'nt, for worl's had her out o' my eye ;

Nor langle, nor tether, I'd let them bring near her—

"Ough, mother," I've cried, "if you tie her she'll die!"

An' so, ever by her from mornin' till night,

Where shamrocks were greener, or daisies more white,

Far down through the rushes as high as my brow,

A gowan an' snow-ball grew I an' my cow !

There, stringin' the daisies, or plattin' the rushes,

To make my white beauty look all the more fair,

Or speelin' away up the wil' apple bushes,

A-gatherin' their blossoms to tie in my hair.

The spring an' the summer we slipt thro' so soon,

Till harvest came on with its big yellow moon,

When, there, as I watched her from under a bough,

Young Dick came a-coortin' to me an' my cow.

A-nie ! how he talked there of love an' of lovers,

An' came night an' mornin' that same to renew ;

While I knew of either as much as the plovers,

Though Dick used to say *they* had love in them, too.

Till on as I lis'ned it seemed the less strange,

An' in me an' over me came such a change ;

For it pleased me so *then*, what it wouldn't do *now*,

That he looked very often from *me* to my cow !

* A Lake in the Province of Connaught.

The autumn flew by, and the winter crept over,
 When all was a garden of blossoms again,
 An' I a wee wiser, I guess, than yer plover,
 Sat crackin' an' laughin' wi' Dick in the glen.
 Till Tooty—poor Tooty!—a-nie, an' a-nie!
 Both tethered an' langled that we might go free,
 Got fankt roun' a bush on the Conn's slippy brow,
 An' drowned was my Tooty—my beautiful cow!

Poor Dick! how his heart must have bled for my beauty,
 He looked for a moment, then slithered away;
 But never that face, since it left my dead Tooty,
 Was raised at our meetin' by night or by day!
 My mother but sighed to her wheel in her croons,
 An' its she, ye'd have said, had the worl' of oul' tunes,
 "Ough, apples may grow upon yon leafless bough,
 An' red-cheeked as ever, sweetheart o' my cow."

Sweetheart o' my cow? Och! I now know her mainin',
 They say I'm not young, and its maybe too thtrue;
 But, to the *oul'* love, if I've still the wee lainin',
 I amn't so sure I'd say "No" to the *new*!
 So, bushes may blossom an' apples may grow,
 As red-cheeked as ever—the dear sen' it so!
 For, with some wee Tooty to graze near me now,
 Might yet come a sweetheart for me *or* my cow!

LOVE AND MONEY.

Oh, sittin' an' sighin' the leeve-long day,
 I cannot sing now as I used to do;
 What is the reason, can any one say,
 There's such woe in a worl' that's so fair to view?
 Sing, is it, Jenny, the same as before?
 Oh, my poor head aches, an' my heart's so sore!
 I knew I was poor, and that that was a sin
 In the eyes of many, who said "No, no;"

But the one sweet voice took my poor brain in,
 For to Harry I thought I was all below !
 Could I feel I was poor while he sighed " How fair ! "
 As he looked in my eyes and stroked my hair !

Oh, love's like a harp of a thousand strings,
 An' girls are silly who sit in its way,
 For love will talk of a thousand things
 That nothing but love could think or say ;
 And maidens who list what they'd rather believe,
 'Tis ever so easy for love to deceive !

That I sat in his light they had told me long,
 For Nelly had riches and beauty, too ;
 But the heart was weak, an' the head *not* strong,
 An', och, it was hard to know how to do.
 To look in that face, an' to bid him " Good-bye,"
 I knew it would kill me, but said I would try.

How I stood that eve, between eight and nine,
 Where the willow bends to the blighted yew,
 While wee Flora looked up with the mournful whine,
 You'd have thought she knew all that my poor
 heart knew.

An' on Harry I gazed till my eyes grew dim,
 An' he seemed like a mist on the far sky's rim.

I had reached him my hand, an' had said " Good-bye,"
 I had said little more to it, neither had he ;
 But he looked in my face, with a tear in his eye,
 Ah, the money alone made him false to me !
 Oh ! is it a wonder I sing no more,
 That my poor head aches, that my heart's so sore ?



M Y C U R L Y H E A D .

THERE's but the blessed ONE on earth
 My heart could ever love—
 I see it clear—ay, clear as that
 Blue heaven there above ;

An' yet they'd have me leave my rogue,
To wed a gilded hall—

Ough ! they little know what lovin' is
Would breathe the like at all.

They never walked the hazel lane,
Or down the whinny glen,
Or met your like, my curly head,
At any where or when.

They say my Jamie isn't rich—
What then ? They should divide ;

And if with us they dont do so
When I become his bride,

My boy can dig, an' I can spin,
An' labour's bite is blest ;

And should our table be but pinched,
Let love go look the rest—

Somewhere along the hazel lane,
Or down the whinny glen,
An' Heaven bless his curly head
That wont be absent then !

My father owns the yellow hills
That hem the valley round ;

My mother, too, unknown to earth,
Has many a purty pound ;

An' save myself nor chick nor child,
Nor livin' soul 's to share ;

So hills and pounds are mine, they say,
That is—if I take care

Of walking down the hazel lane,
Or through the whinny glen,
Or cuddling with that curly head,
That meets me now and then !

Ough ! I wouldn't give one cloudy ring

From Jamie's manly brow,
Were hills and pounds—ay, kingdoms, too !

Paraded to me now ;

Nor would I slack our bit of crack
For more than I could tell ;
Though father's good, an' mother's more,
An', och, I love them well ;
But love, besides, the hazel lane,
An' yon wee whinny glen,
An' more than all, the curly head,
That meets me now and then !

An' if my Jamie be-no' rich,
It isn't but he might ;
For well I know the shinin' girl
Would pad the road to-night,
If Jamie only waved his hand—
But that he wouldn't do,
Because he knows I'd never see
Another morning's dew—
If I had walked the hazel lane,
Or seen the whinny glen,
Without yer voice, my curly head,
To sing me " But and Ben."

But lest you think I'm what I'm not—
A disobedient child—
I told my mother just the truth ;
She chandhred till she smiled :
" We'll try and wile yer father round—
He knows you're such a pest !"
Ough ! never fear my mother's *wile*—
But time 'll tell the rest,
Somewhere along the hazel lane,
Or down the whinny glen,
And Heaven bless his curly head,
Shall read the riddle then !



THE WRONG STEP.

Air—“Fare-you-well, Killeevy.”

Any one at all conversant with the habits, natural as well as acquired, of the Irish people, knows how exceedingly severe is the etiquette amongst them in certain stages of love-making—how very stringent are the rules laid down, especially in rural districts, for the preservation of maiden delicacy, and how very rarely—speaking from a comparative point of view—they are infringed either in letter or in spirit. Courtship must be far advanced, and a genuine return of love very apparent, before any Irish girl, not lost to self-respect, visits or goes unnecessarily near the home of her sweetheart. Her lover, especially if he were sincere in his attachment, would be the first to make her feel she had done amiss.

“When the car visits the horse it is time for him to look shy,” is a saying illustrative of this feeling, and may be heard in every rural district over the country. The cautious, though confiding, mother never fails, in the deep earnestness of her heart, to mingle such sentiments carelessly, as it were, with her general observations amongst her children, strengthening them occasionally with the addendum—“It’s the whitest apron, dear, that’s the aisiest soiled.”

Ireland abounds with such rude morsels of indirect instruction, or rules for self-government—some of them, doubtless, importations, but the greater number, like the above, indicating their Irish origin, as well by their forms of thought and expression, as by their easily perceptible relation to those habits which in many instances are peculiar to the country, and which, having given birth to the sayings, draw from them in return both extension and stability to themselves.

I STOLE a step to yon well—

Och ! maidens' hearts are silly things ;
For, clearer than our own well

You wouldn’t find in fifty springs !
But yon ! the hemlocks hide it—

The bitter broom looks on below—
Ere I’m again beside it

A thousand springs shall come and go !

Was’t robin sang by yon well

“ Where got ye, love, that dainty red ?
Or where the curls ye dandle

So doucely roun’ yer purty head ?
Och, och ! yer dhrugs—we know them—
That give such tints and grow such curls ;
See, here’s the book’ll show them—

But, sure, yer larnin’ bates the worl’s !”

Oh, bright yon thorn-bush blossoms,
 But sweets may shine on angry things,
 And songs that seem the bosom's,
 Be like the hum that drives the stings ;
 But wit has come of weepin',
 As daisies come of April rain ;
 An' wrung from thorny keepin'
 Have sweets been sweeter for the pain.

"Ah," sang wee poutin' Bessie,
 Wee sистher, croodlin' at my knee,
 "Ye're envious of our Jessie,
 Because ye're not so nice as she !
 Read up yer tints an' washes,
 For what makes *you*, ye think, so gran',
 She scorns yer borrowed splashes,
 Who's painted by the Maker's han' ! "

But, throe spoke, up the loanie
 This voice that rails where all is dum' :
 "Wee coachie went to pony,
 It should have just let pony come !
 And Jamie's falsely fair art
 Did well to make her white look black,
 Who took, unasked, her bare heart
 Where any carrion bird could peck ! "

Oh, never more to yon well
 I'll slip to hear the robin sing !
 God keep me by our own well—
 There's dam and lave within its spring !
 But though my cheeks were dhreepin'
 In yon, my last heart-breakin' stan',
 Far more I prize that weepin'
 Than all his counthry-side of lan' !



DIRTY WATER AND CLEAN.

There is a quiet gleam of worldly wisdom in the old saying "Don't throw out yer *dirty wather* till ye get in the *clane*" that is tolerably characteristic of *Ulster*; but, perhaps, "ou're auld farrant," to be genuinely Irish. When these old sayings change their dress it is sometimes difficult to determine the place of their nativity. On the other hand, some of them would lose much by any change of apparel. In many instances the natural discernment of the people points to the evil of a change, and the thing passes from mouth to mouth unaltered.

It is true we have frequently such varieties as these—"March *comes in* like a lion and *goes out* like a lamb;" "March comes in wi' an *ether's heed* (adder's head) an' gaes oot wi' a peacock's tail."

The *adder*, even were the dialect changed, would show the latter form not to be Irish. It is very probable neither is Irish. The first smacks of English soil and surroundings nearly as much as the latter does of Scottish. On the more southern borders of the County Antrim, and in what may be termed English districts, the first form is prevalent; in the more northern and Scottish of the same county only the last is met with.

MOLLY WHITE, you're dreaming, dreaming,
 Dreams that make your mother sad ;
 Jamie's change is all in seeming,
 Molly's dreams put Molly mad ;
 Raving of "As good or better"—
 Far-off hills, my girl, look green—
 Ne'er throw out your dirty water
 Till you've fairly in the clean !

Molly White, you're dreaming, dreaming,
 Better bush, however bare,
 Than a castle while its teeming—
 That's a *castle in the air* !
 Toss your head and hum "No matter!"
 Ah! my girl, I've something seen :
 Don't throw out the dirty water
 Till you're *sure* you've in the clean !

Molly White, your senses gather—
 "Johnny smiles and Jamie sighs!"
 Is't a glimpse of sunny weather
 Makes a summer in your eyes ?

Johnny's but a toying trotter—
Here at morn, and there at e'en—
Hold you fast the dirty water
Till your thumb be on the clean !

Molly White, you're bonnie, bonnie—
Every cluster of your hair
Far outshines the yellow money
Queens might give to look so fair !
Molly, Molly, curls must scatter—
Snow must sit where sun had been—
Then you'd prize the drop of water,
Though it weren't quite so clean !

Molly White, your cheeks are painted
By the hand that paints the morn—
Och, then, things so poppy-tinted
Should have grown but in the corn !
Ah ! that tint, my dreaming daughter,
Would it serve some drouthy e'en
When the mug of *any* water
Might be counted not unclean ?

Molly White, your whiteness such is
Maybe few its like have seen ;
Eyes, too, dark as darkest touches
O'er the blossoms of the bean ;
Molly, Molly, what would matter
All the beauties ever seen,
If we mourned this dirty water—
Lost before we'd got the clean ?

Molly White, though riper, rarer,
Were the charms that you can boast,
Fair as you, and maybe fairer,
Have been left to sit a frost.
Hold and have, and hum "No matter!"
When the far-off hills look green,
Ne'er throw out the dirty water
Till you've fairly in the clean !

NEVER WAS A JOCK WITHOUT A JENNY.

"There never was a Jock without a Jenny"—viz., there is none so clownish or repulsive in either body or mind but he may meet with a partner equal to himself in disagreeable peculiarities. This old saying—of the Job's comforter school—is pretty general throughout Ulster; and, though evidently of Scottish origin, appears to be one of those which would suffer but little from change. It would lose none of its paint from receiving an Irish tint, as thus:—There never was a Barney without a Biddy; but the *Jock* being an importation, and the people aware of this, they are doubtless satisfied enough with the idea of having to borrow a term suggestive of the merely ridiculous. Their feelings in such cases may be somewhat akin to those of the Englishman who, when taunted by a son of Gaul for having no word properly equivalent for *ennui* in his language, coolly observed that his countrymen had no need of a word expressive of an affliction that did not exist among them.

Och ! Kitty had so many wiles,
Ye'd wondher where she foun' them ;
An' Kitty's cheeks, wi' jumpin' smiles,
Kep' hundhreds hurclin' roun' them.
Fair Kitty Doran only knows
What boys she brought thegether—
Ah, me ! that e'er she squeezed her toes
In over-scrimpit leather !
 Oh, lasses seek a shoe to fit,
 Be wide your foot or weenie,
 Nor ever fear for that you'll sit
 As Jock without his Jeanie !

Och ! Kitty Doran had a waist,
A noggin's hoop went round it ;
An' Kitty had a world of taste—
Ah ! rather much—confound it !
An' Kitty's foot—why ! dance nor ball—
Ahem !—well, since we're talkin',
'Twas not a dancin' Dick, at all,
But an honest foot for walkin' !
 Oh ! whether foot be over-grown,
 Or whether warped or weenie,
 There never sat the bird alone—
 The Jock without the Jeanie !

Oh, Kitty dear, you took your swing—
 You didn't min' your mother—
 She said your boots were not the thing ;
 But you !—you'd have none other !
 An' in them, there, ye crushed yer toes,
 Your forehead flushed and straimin' ;
 An' thus *they* got their long night's doze—
 You couldn't sleep for scraimin' !
 Oh, lasses seek a shoe to suit,
 Whate'er may be the weather,
 Nor ever try to lodge your foot
 In oure-scrimpit leather !

Och ! Kitty dear, that awful night—
 Thaym feet, an' how you spoiled them !
 Ye might as well—indeed you might,
 An' betther, too—have boiled them !
 Your foot was just as good as those
 That tript o'er “ such a targer ! ”
 But now you've *nuteens* on your toes,
 Like Sprecklie's eggs or larger !
 Oh, whether feet be overgrown,
 Or whether warped or weenie,
They never made the bird alone—
 The Jock without the Jeanie !

Ah ! Kate—from sea, Philosophie
 Has many a curious landing,
 But few, I wis, that couldn't dhree
 One's breadth of understanding !
 Och ! *undher*-standing, here or there,
 Its breadth should rough the weather,
 Ere crushed an' croobed, till wet our hair,
 In scraps o' patent leather !
 Oh, lasses, when your toes ye bind,
 Beware o' niggard dealing,
 For, och, it wont expand the mind,
 Though, faix, it may the feeling !

Oh, Kitty Doran, once my own—
 The heart o' corn you knew me,
 An' had you let but "well" alone,
 That same I'd still been to ye ;
 But, och, be near us !—when I see
 You to *yourself* so crusty,
 What might you not have been to me ?
 Ma faith, I feared to thrust ye !
 But cock yer cap, an' watch, an' wait,
 For wooers love makes many ;
 An' there's—whate'er may be yer state—
 No Jock without a Jenny !

B I D D I E ' S N O T I O N S .

Air—"The Young May Moon."

COME, drivel and droop no more, my man,
 But give us a lilt as of yore, my man,
 Till each Oligarch's brain,
 With our thunder refrain,
 Shall ring to its frowzy old core, my man !
 If your hand be welted with toil, my boy,
 Its your tongue has a smack o' the soil, my boy ;
 And there's that in your eye
 He had better slip by
 Who would make of you factionists' spoil, my boy.

Though your brain wasn't panged from the pages, love,
 Of the Roman and Grecian sages, love,
 There is under your hat—
 Let them whistle to that !—
 The honey and wine of the ages, love :
 The knowledge that mind is awaking, boy,
 That the day of the peoples is breaking, boy,
 That to *think* and to *do*,
 From the shackles of Hu~~h~~,

The world his big muscles is shaking, boy !
Though a calf in a bog you'd be aping, love,
Your betters when bowing and scraping, love ;
 And though you'd look small
 At Mucksplendhorpuff's ball,
When the illegant Fudge is a-shaping, love,
You've a heart that can feel for a neighbour boy,
And a hand for your Bildie to labour, boy ;
 And a voice by a turn,
 At a dance or a churn,
That can ring like the tuck of a tabor, boy !

And, in to the boot, you've a name, my lad,
Though despising that profligate, Fame, my lad,
 That, we needn't be told,
 Has the ring of *true* gold
Wherever was heard of that same, my lad !
For you've none of you hokin'-an'-snoakin', love,
That get manliness bended or broken, love ;
 But, wherever I look,
 Its as true as the Book !
You're the top of the tree, and no jokin' love !

Then drivelling and drooping give o'er, my boy,
When its you like the *aigle* should soar, my boy ;
 Let the *worst* do its *best*,
 You've a *heart* in your breast !
Has a king on his throne any more, my boy ?
If a way of the world be to goad it, love,
Or a shoulder, when crouching, to load it, love,
 Sing us light to the blind,
 Aud a cloud to the mind
That's untrue to what heaven bestowed it, love !

For it isn't the pound or the acre, lad,
That can grow either slave or slave-maker, lad,
 Till the soul and the brain
 Show a groove for the chain
As clear as the cut of a quaker, lad !

Then away, like a lark from the sod, my love,
 You were made in the image of God, my love ;
 And the powers of WRONG
 Never stamped with the *thong*
 Should make you the clout or the clod, my love !

K I T T Y ' S N E I G H B O U R S .

On the hill among the trees,
 There's a darlin' cheerie cot,
 And of all my mother sees,
 Oh, she says her heart's in that ;
 What—when mother has her own—
 Can another's be to her ?—
 Her, that would not for a throne,
 Seek another's "Foot or Fur!"

Is it want a neighbour's land ?
 Ah, my dears, 'twixt you and me,
 I've a guess of how it stands,
 Maybe just as well as she ;
 For my mother has her Kate,
 And our neighbour has his son,
 And she fears I may be late
 If I'm shy to tackle on.

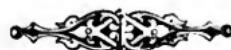
Oh, she thinks I'd like to speel
 Far above the "Hill and trees"—
 How I laugh when o'er her wheel
 She has croonin's such as these :—
 Ah, should even Dukes and Earls
 Wham'le here to sob and sigh,
 Are ye very sure, my girls,
 That your *peace* could roost so high ?

How my father bobs and winks,
 While my mother sits and croons !
 "Fags, the words are wise"—he thinks—
 "Though she wanders through the tunes!"
 Then I set them all a-smudge,
 With a chapter on the vogues,
 Or when I be Lady Fudge,
 How I'll birl away the brogues !

Or how girls that wish to rise,
 Needn't wish for silver lungs,
 When to be polite and wise,
 They'll have but to slit their tongues !
 Och; I know the saucy "Bit"—
 Ay, and mother, so do you—
 Who would *slave* before she'd *sit*
 Any Lady Cockatoo !

To be wedded, poor and bare,
 Is as bad as one need tell ;
 But to win the wealth we wear,
 And to know we've won it well,
 With the heart and hand we love
 Ever near us, sun or snow ;
 Ah, whate'er be bliss above,
 There's the bliss for me below !

For our neighbours on the hill,
 With the trees about their door,
 I've a neighbour's wish and will,
 Maybe whiles a something more ;
 And we'll see, about "The Fall,"
 How my mother's fancy goes ;
 But we needn't talk of all
 That a body feels and knows !



SAYS I. AN' SAYS HE.

Air—“Moll Roe in the Morning.”

I'VE never been far from my mother,
Though latterly whiles I've been known
To walk—ye'll persaive!—where *another*
Might also be walking alone!
I'm partial to twilight and shadow,
An' fond of the linnet and thrush;
But, och, you've a voice, Newtownbreda,
Could wheedle the bird of the bush!
Then up where the willows are broken,
And Lagan keeps kissin' the park,
A thousand wee things have been spoken,
If one could but hear in the dark!

My mother this while's in a swither—
Politer, “A bit of a fig!”
To know whether Love in brogue-leather,
Or gold on a couple of sticks,
The betther might do for her daughter—
Ough, och! it seems light on the tongue,
But blood—does it railly grow water?
Or mothers—were ever they young?
There's mine hath such faith in the penny
For makin' us happy an' wise;
She couldn't see motes on a guinea—
The dazzle's too sstrong for her eyes!

Last night while I stood all a-flutter,
Good-byin' with Wiggie M'Dowd,
The moon, like a churnin' o' butther,
Slid through the white crud of a cloud;
An' there with her light kem a motion,
A-back o' the sweet briar bush,
An' somethin' that gave me the notion
Yon ne'er was the neb of a thrush!
Och, though I've no faith in the penny
For makin' us happy or wise,
I doubt, to see motes on the guinea
I'm rather too wake in the eyes!

Says somebody, "Down wi' the wisted !
 There's *silk* in oul' Bother-my-lug,
 Though the face of him's wrinkled and twisted,
 Like somethin' ye'd see on a jug !"
 Says I—“ You're too fond o' yer rakin'
 To make aither honey or hive,
 An', fags, if she knew of our spakin',
 My mother would kill me alive !”
 Says he—“ T'other night, when a-walkin',
 You know what was said at the park !”
 Says I—“ You're the weary for talkin'—
 But how could I *hear* in the dark !”

Says he—“ In the Vale o' the Lagan
 I work for my keep an' my wear ;
 An' don't care the slap of a saggan
 Who hears all they know of me there !
 A boy that can bend to the saison,
 On rig, in a jig, or at hay,
 I generally know of a raison
 For anything odd I may say.
 An', throgs, it's no harm in you, Jenny,
 To lurk where the down-sittin' lies ;
 For, och, to see motes on the guinea
 Takes wondherful strenth in the eyes !”

Says I—“ There's yer own Newtownbreda,
 As sweet a wee spot as I know—
 A highlan' of orchard an' meadow,
 An' cottages white as the snow ;
 An', boy, if my pockets were flowin'
 As free as its sands when they're bare,
 There isn't an inch in my knowin'
 I'd roost me so ready as there !
 So never you fancy the penny
 Could purchase a nook in my breast ;
 An', now, with no fault to the guinea,
 Its aisy to guess at the rest !”

Ough, Willie!—what use in consailin'
A name that's so sweet to my ear!
The never a fault or a failin'
Has Willie that human could hear!
His brow may be brown as the berry,
His han' may be hard as the horn,
But his cheek has the tint o' the cherry,
His eye has the flash o' the morn!
An' clear as the Queen on yer penny,
The noble is stamped on the man—
Ough! thinkin' on Willie, yer guinea
Would luck like a mote in my han'!



BETTER AND STRONG.

My brother had sailed but a fortnight away,
Till mother with grievin' was laid in the clay;
My father kept dawney, yet hummed the day long—
“When Willie comes back I'll be better and strong!”

The flax had been poor, an' the pirtas but few;
The agent kep' craikin', so what could we do?
The new tenant came, with his laise us to warn,
But left us, God bless him, a shed in the barn.

I thought my poor father looked brighter a while,
Slippin' out on his staff for a sait at the stile,
Where oft he sat hummin', the blessed day long,
“Ough, Willie, come back till I'm better and strong!”

'Twas whispered by some that the turn in his air
Was only the faiver that comes o' despair;
While others said darkly, “There's hope in the lan'—
There's hope in a change for the better at han'!”

But, och, you'd have seen, as the threshold he crosst,
That hope couldn't make the wee comforts he'd lost;
That hope couldn't aqual in brightening him long,
What once used to make him both better and strong.

But shorter grew daily that watch by the stile,
 An' more my dead mother's that heart-braiken' smile ;
 Till, propped in the corner the dreary day long,
 He hummed, as if dhraimin', "*I'll never be strong !*"

I hung o'er his knee, like a blaiched willa-wan',
 While he stroked at my hair with a wanderin' han' ;
 An' drip-drop stole in, thro' the curls he confused,
 A somethin' that toul' me of tears when he mused :

"Now, what would you do, Lizzie dear, if I'd die ?"
 "O-rah ! what would I do, is it ? Sit down an' cry !
 Sit down an' cry—what's there else I could do,
 Barrin' pray for the time that would lay me wi' you !"

"Och, silly wee Lizzie, that same would be sin !
 An', then, its so little your cryin' would win ;
 The rain o'er the rock must hae years to prevail,
 While hardie to hardie may soon do a dail.

"The worl', my wee darlin', 's a rock in yer way,
 An' tears 'll not saf'en it, flow as they may ;
 But why should young mornin' sit down in a gloom,
 For the darksome oul' night's havin' left her his room !

"There's lint for the pullin', an' yours wi' the rest,
 Though where at the present the Maker knows best ;
 Your wheel must be goin', for, och, 't may be long
 Till Willie comes back, or I'm better an' strong !

"Now, kiss me, wee Lizzie ! ah, jewel, don't cry,
 For all will be well were a weenie time by !"—
 I knelt at his pillow, that lonely night long,
 And I wept—'twas a sin !—he was better and strong !



THE FLOWER O' THE WELL.

Air—"Moll Koone."

The "Flower of the Well" is the first pail or pitcher of water taken from the well on the morning of NEW MAY DAY. The superstition connected with it is pretty general throughout Ireland, though some localities seem to differ from others as to the nature of the power or privileges conferred by the water on her who is so fortunate as to obtain it. Thus, while in some districts it is supposed to secure merely a prosperous season of milk and butter, without prejudice to the chances of neighbouring dairies, in others it is regarded as a means whereby women, who are "not cannie," can command to their own *churns* what should be found in those of their vicinity. If the writer's recollection be truthful, it was in the former spirit that the *Flower of the Well* was competed for in the locality chosen in the following lines for illustrating the superstition; and, whether or not youngsters may be regarded as having carried to the well with them more of merry feeling than of faith in its mystic qualities, it was no unusual thing for some who were not very young to "sit up" all night in order to be first in the morning.

Is it merely a *fancy* in the present writer to suppose that persons even slightly acquainted with Scandinavian mythology can hardly fail to perceive in this superstition some connexion with the "Well of Wisdom?" With the consent of Father Mimir we know it was the daily custom of the *three wise maidens*, VERDANDI, URD and SKULD, to draw water from that mystic spring wherewith to nourish the tree YGGDRASIL. This tree, also, was represented by our sprigs of rowan tree or mountain ash, which we were in the habit of placing, as in some localities is not yet abandoned, above our doors, and in our byres over the cattle. It is, perhaps, still more clearly represented by our "May poles." Be these things as they may, this superstition, like most of its class, has something healthy at its root—a sort of benevolent fraud, perhaps—if only in the inducement to early rising at such a season when, though wisdom or worldly prosperity may not be found immediately in the waters of the well, a clearer head and an earlier attention to the duties of the day may give much of the mystery a readable meaning, and be a large apology for the kindly deceit of some rude or early thinker who had endeavoured to enforce a general good by an appeal to the supernatural.

'TWAS half down the loanin' ere it opened on the bog,

In below the speckled holly

That came out of Murray's scrog,

The clear drop then dimpled in the Mays of long ago—

Is it ever well and river,

You wee well o' Hillsboro'?

If near it would I know it—is it changed, does any know?

Has it still the daffodil,

Or the sedges by its edges—

Down in the loanin', as when to the village bell

I once gamboled, while we scrambled

For the Flower o' the Well?

From gray eve till dawning, at the back o' Harry's thorn,
Had been watching *cannie Maggie*
For the water and the morn ;
But I, girls ! I see me, on that blessed new May day—
Ah, the seasons bring their reasons
For whate'er they take away !

My hair was thick and yellow then—you see it, thin and gray !—

But I crept—for Meg had slept—
Like the shadow o'er a meadow
Down through the loanin', till the joyous village bell
Burst a-ringin' to my singin',
“ *Mine's the Flower o' the Well !* ”

Oh, where are the merry Mays—the Mays of long ago—
When the rowan ruled the dairy—
When our boreens all a-glow

With flowers of the season that we gathered to and fro,
Shone in mellow green and yellow
Like so many moons below ?

Ah, where are they who gathered them with us so long ago ?
Dare we say, if in the clay,
They'd be near us, or could hear us

Down through the loanin', if again the joyous bell
“ Timble-tambled ” while we scrambled
For the Flower o' the Well.

The bells—oh, the merry bells !—the bells of Hillsboro' !
Do they ring them ? Do they swing them
With yon joyous to and fro ?

Do maids gather flowers for the doors of high and low ?
Are there many—is there *any*
Of that blessed long ago ?

Are mothers still as loving as was mine, I'd like to know ?
Do they weep while others sleep,
Praying—saying, “ Oh, if straying
Far from the loanin', the village and the bell,
Will that sleeper meet our KEEPER
Like the Flower o' the Well ? ”

THE LAST LETTER.

Air — “Castle Tirowen.”

It would be difficult to conceive of any combination of sounds, in similar compass, more wildly pathetic than the above little air. It is the wail of a stricken heart—even to the irregular beat of its pulses—the most piercing, with the exception, perhaps, of one or two of the *ceannans*, or cries, with which the writer is familiar. Whether or not it ever before had words he cannot say.

Oh, then, stay with me—bear with me—frien’ o’ my chil’ !
 An’ he died like a saint, too—my Flower o’ the Wil’ !
 An’ they slaughtered my darlin’—the Cromwell’s—the
 knaves !

Oh, my curse on the fightin’s o’ them an’ their slaves !

An’ they hadn’t the power to kill him out, then ?
 Ough, yer strenth, my big beauty, was like nine or ten !
 But they wounded, and killed him, to die on his bed ;
 An’ ye saw him—God bless you ! an’ know all he said !

An’ ye knelt by my Flower as his breath went an’ came ?
 May the broad light of glory be yours for that same !
 An’ ye saw him laid down, where his mother can’t pray ?
 May the Lord watch that grave lyin’ far, far away !

Oh, my grief on their woundin’s—to wound such a head !
 Will the sky not come down for the blood they have shed ?
 Is it tell me of patience—woe ! woe ! bitter woe !
 An’ the big heart laid lonely where mine cannot go !

An’ ye brought me his lett’er—his own purty write ?
 Ough, I’d know it his own at the dark hour o’ night ;
 For it’s often I’ve seen—from his long workin’ day,
 With the moon in that window—him scribblin’ away !

Or, wi’ me at my wheel, when the saisons were bad,
 An’ the wee grain o’ flax, or whatever we had,
 Wasn’t more than half able to meet what was due,
 Ough, his songs kep’ me cherry the blissed night through !

An’ a purtier scrape, darlin’, couldn’t be foun’,
 Though it’s dyin’ he was when his pen put it down !
 Wira ! What was I doing when *he* was so low ?
 Maybe *merry* from waitin’ his ordher to go !

Oh, then, bear wi' me!—Bitther an' sorry's the day,
 That it's *I* should be here, an' that bird in the clay!
 Oh, yon moon o' my winther nights—whiter than snow,
 But it's aisy said, *patience*, an' you lying low!

Tibesure, it was kin', where my chil' was unknown,
 To afford the bit shilther denied by his own;
 But among their wil' warrin's what business had he—
 Though an aigle in heart, an' as strhong as a tree?

Wirra! Where will *she* wandher, has no one on arth?
 May the Heavens look down on the desolate harth!
 Ough, I'll wade the wil' waves, though my grave they
 should be,
 An' I'll go to my darlin' that can't come to me!

P O R T B A L L I N T R A E .

THERE's a spot in our Antrim—away by her coast—
 Where the summer wave rings like the voice of a host;
 Where the roaming Atlantic howls, foam to his breast,
 As the salmon-ful Bush sweeps her foot through his crest!
 Oh, that spot's like a patch on the waste of God's blue,
 When the clouds slip aside for the moon to look through,
 Ever calm in its beauty, and soft in its shine,
 Though so rude is the rock, and unbridled the brine,
 And that Portballintræ its old cognomen brings
 From' when words had a meaning made kinship with
 things.
 When the Gael's melting language fell soft as the dew,
 Or cracked the blast under his "Faragh, aboo!"
 When the sept of O'Haughey—not wholly decayed—
 Ever *last* in the revel, and *first* in the raid—
 Made the flash of their spears o'er the soil that they
 claimed,
 The quickest-read title-deed ever was named;
 For the fiery-souled Celt held an Ard-Tighearna's sway
 O'er the fish, fowl, and acres of Portballintræ!

O, Portballintrae, and your sister "Bushfoot,"
Though the voice of the clans in your sheelings be mute—
Though the sept of O'Haughey—a war-wolf made tame!—
Hath the circular syllable chipped from its name;
And the lightnings of old in its spirit subdued,
Oh, its veins even yet have an Ard-Tighearna's blood;
And its memories break o'er me so stormfully grand,
While I perch on these crags—while I gaze on yon strand:
That the present grows dim in the light of the past,
And the chink of chain-armour goes by on the blast,
And the vale of the Bush to its soft centre rings,
With the roll of the chariots and voices of Kings,
Till I see each broad banner flash fold after fold,
On whose fresh silken field flames the sun-burst of gold!

O, Portballintrae, and your sister Bushfoot,
Though the voice of your septs in your sheelings be mute,
While I muse on these crags—while I gaze up the vales,
'Tis the shout of the hunter comes down on the gale;
For the hills seem alive with the flash of the spear—
With the bay of the dogs and the bound of the deer;
And the kilt and the coolun sing "Flap" on the wind,
That the light-footed kerne runneth closely behind!
Then the rout and the revel, as twilight comes down,
Till the smoke rises blue where the heather lies brown;
Then the dance of the maidens—the tear and the smile—
That show but in shadow save in our green isle,
As the song or the clairseach is mournful or gay—
Oh, good luck to those memories of Portballintrae!

O, Portballintrae and your sister, Bushfoot,
Though the song of those eves in your sheelings be mute,
Though the streams of progression have crept on your
ways,
With the music and sparkle of peacefuller days—
Though your sheelings themselves flashing white as a
pearl,
Have grown Saxon enough for a sassanach earl—

Though the curragh be swung on your surges no more—
Though the cooluned kerne sleeps unawaked by their roar,
Ye've the song of the waters as grandly sublime
As when first it was waked on the ear of young time.
Ye've the crags in their dusk, and the sands in their white,
And the hills in their mantles of verdure and light,
As fresh as if fallen but now from His hand,
Who hollowed this ocean and moulded that strand,
And piled up yon bent-bannered towers of sand
In the mouth of that vale where so silent they stand ;
Yea, a vale that, behold, when creation was young,
Or the nerves of old ocean more ironly strung,
Was surely the walk of the waves in their play—
Ah, then, where are the fishermen fished in that bay ?
Let them sleep ! And yon knolls ! Let their bluff bosoms
glare
Like our old recollections through shadows of care !
They're the tombs of the centuries—glories away,
And with no resurrection for Portballintrae !

O, Portballintrae, were the way with the will,
How the minstrel whose soul to thy glories hath bowed,
'Twixt the "Feather-bed" crag and yon house on the hill,
Far removed from the jostle and joust of the crowd,
Could in ecstasy wander, and worship each trill
Of the waves by thy curraghs once fearlessly ploughed,
While the solan-bird, silently seeking his prey,
Goeth down like a flash from the womb of the cloud,
And covers the cleft he hath made on his way,
Down the shimmering waste with a sun-burst of spray ;
Or, again, to behold when the winds are at play,
And the wave, in the wealth of its passionate white,
Like some mighty spirit cast bare on the night,
Goeth up where the tempest careereth abroad,
Rolling forth such wild anthems as waters delight,
When they climb the deep gloom, on the wings of their
might,
To pour to the glory of Nature and God !

MY JAMIE'S WEAKNESS.

My Jamie's not a gentleman
As far as gear may go;
And yet ye'd maybe think him one
If knowing all I know!
In faix, they've dinged it in my ears
I'm looking far too high;
And, may I never sin, my dears,
If much o' that's a lie!
For Jamie's such—
It's saying *much*,
But truth, ye know's but true!—
As, on two feet,
Ye'd hardly meet,
An' search the counthry through!
To make my Jamie *more* than man
I never mean to thry—
He shows a wakeness now and then,
And maybe so do I!
But, 'twixt ourselves, I couldn't think
It either wise or fair
If I gave Jock or Jill the wink
Of what's a-twixt the pair!
There's more, you see,
It seems to me—
In throgs, its purty plain—
Were I to tell
He loves so well
There's *some* would think *me* vain!
If love's a wakeness, girls, in *him*,
Ough, I'll go bail there's some,
For such in Charlie, Dick or Tim,
Would never crack their thum'!
And, though there's some *might* take his part,
There's more would raise their fur,
And spit and girn of "*Such* a heart,
To love the *likes* o' *her*!"

I'd tell you more
 But at the door
 Yon tip-tap!—[Whe-e-sht! *just now!*]
 Hem!—Mother, dear,
 Just spin you here
 While I go milk the cow!

MY BLACK-NORTH GIRL.

Oh, my Black-North Girl—my Black-North Girl!
 I know nothing so fair as my Black-North Girl;
 For never the snows,
 Nor ever the rose,
 Nor ever a stream out of Pleaskin flows,
 With beauty and light to equal those,
 O'er bosom and cheek,
 And in eyes that speak
 Of a soul at once so noble and meek—
 Of a soul that shines there ever and ever—
 Ye see it as clear as a beam in the river!
 While the thoughts that spring
 In that holiest thing,
 Like streamers of light through their dark depths quiver!—
 Oh, dearer to me than a palace of pearl
 Were a home in the heart of my Black-North Girl!
 Oh, my Black-North Girl—my Black-North Girl!
 You're a mate for the man could make me an earl;
 And 'tisn't for me,
 O, ruan-mo-chree,
 To look up from my poor humanitie,
 To the heaven of beauty and truth in thee—
 To a brow more bright
 Than the gauzy white
 That encircles the moon of a new-May night,
 As over its breadth of pearly gleaming,
 That long, dark glory of hair is streaming,

So cloudily curled,
 'Twere more than a world
 To sit in its night-black depths a-dreaming ;
 Oh, dearer than many bright worlds could be,
 Were the love of that Black-North Girl to me !

Oh, my Black-North Girl—my Black-North Girl !
 What a song hath the foot of my Black-North Girl ;
 Though light in its tip,
 As a breath on that lip,
 Where my soul of fire so yearns to sip,
 As dazzlingly over my path you trip—
 So modestly grand,
 To touch but that hand,
 Sweet goodness, I'd wander a desert of sand !

Oh, look on me ! look on me !—answer me, dearest !
 Love speaking wildly is love the sincerest !
 Oh, speak to me—speak,
 Though my heart you should break,
 For death from your silence were death the severest ;
 And sweeter than life in a palace of pearl,
 Were to die, if you'd will it, my Black-North Girl !

A CHIMNEY CHANT.

'Tis true the path is rather dark,
 We're bound to journey o'er ;
 But Hope has yonder fixed a spark
 May grow to something more :
 Yet so or no, we may not die,
 If March be not a June ;
 Nor, baby-like, sit down and sigh
 For butter from the moon !

We'll find a way to "make our day,"
 And were each inch a mile,
 I'd run it round by "Yea" or "Nay,"
 Before I'd take a stile :

For *still* I've seen, however bare,
 The paths that tried my strength,
 Some little floweret here and there,
 That paid me for their length !

And nearer *cuts* to cunning known,
 Or travelled but by few,
 May cut or crack the cunning bone
 Ere half-way slips it through ;
 Take-in and-out, or round-about—
 No fear for honest limbs ;
 For Honesty's a tidy trout,
 That strengthens as he swims !

But there's a knack, when understood,
 The safest thing I know—
 It never has a name but "Good"
 For any wind may blow ;
 With it, where'er may lie our beat—
 Whate'er the ills a-head—
 This "Good" contrives to flower the feet
 From every flint they tread !

'Tis not the glow of gold alone,
 Can thaw a frosty fate ;
 'Tis not in Love to turn to stone
 At Want's most wintry gate.
 While oft, where bound in golden strings,
 He proves a heartless scamp ;
 Where maimed by Want—*save in the wings!*—
 Ne'er gleamed his holier lamp !

They tell us of the "rich-and-great"—
 What is it—fruit or flowers ?
 Who recks ! When not for this retreat,
 The good and wise be ours !
 'Tis only "Goodness" *can* be great
 With "Wisdom," why, he's more !
 And, sure, the twain have willing feet
 For every open door !

And Virtue—how so proud her crest,
 Amongst the glittering grand—
 As proud may spurn from Misery's breast
 The tempter's jewelled hand :
 She little recks our tinsel toys,
 Our rank, or our array—
 Her home's the heart, and not the *guise*
 That changes every day !

Then hold to these, my pouting bird,
 Let riches come or go ;
 And from them *one day*, take my word,
 Shall golden blossoms grow ;
 But as the odour climbs the stalk,
 Before it scales the sky,
 So giants, girl, before they walk,
 Must creep as you or I.

Then, though we need not leave the sun,
 To clog our feet in snows,
 Nor pluck a thorn to rest upon
 Where readily comes a rose :
 If through a drear and wintry haze,
 Poor pilgrims, we've been sent,
 From snow, itself, let's try to raise
 An altar to CONTENT !

C A S T E A N D C R E E D .

COME, man ! your hand, a brother sings,
 Or silken be't or sergy ;
 The wars of nations leave to kings,
 And those of creeds to clergy :
 And taste with us that grand sublime
 Which zests your every other,
 By holding man, whate'er his clime,
 His caste or creed, a *brother* !

May all who'd sow opposing views,
 Their harvests find tremendous,
 While, oh, from such, and from their dues,
 The Lord of love defend us !

What, though the waves should walk the air,
Betwixt each earthly acre ;
What, though each hill a differing pray'r
Should offer to its Maker ;
Do these make men the less a-kin,
Or pleas for hate and slaughter ?
If so, whate'er the weight of sin,
It lies with hills and water !
Ah, if, indeed, ye hold a creed,
That Conscience calls a high one,
Then hold it for your spirit's need,
And not a scourge for my one !

We've fair—we've foul in every clime,
In every creed and calling ;
We've men to sport their chaff sublime
O'er every feather's falling ;
We've men of straw, of stick, of stone ;
We've soul whose savor such is
If, loathing virtue—*blood* and *bone*,
Adores the *ghost* on crutches !
Ah, Virtue, ever in our throats,
Much wear and tear attend thee !
For *wear* thou wilt, as wear our coats,
But, faith, 'tis worse to mend thee !

Still wherefore make the wordy moan
O'er ills that mayn't be mended—
Where *will's* so weak that thousands groan
In guilt they ne'er intended ?
Our own poor mite of righteous ways,
Let's hold from frost and ferment—
But not for crowds or stated days,
Like Save-all's Sabbath garment !
Let's clear our light to *show* the right—
To aid in its extending ;
And loathe the bile would green the sight,
O'er *any* Worth's ascending !

My neighbour's weal is weal to me,

If reared not on my ruin !

And though for what I feel or be,

He'd care no more than Bruin,

I'd say, enjoy your silken share—

Yea ! as I hope for Heaven ;

For Coin and Care a wedded pair

Are six times out of seven !

Miss Fortune trips a painted porch,

Too oft in slippery sandal,

Where coldlier glares her gilded torch,

Than Misery's farthing candle !

Then creeds and classes, To-or-Fro—

Thy smile with each, my brother !

We must have sun, and shade, and snow—

They'll come to aid each other !

Let matter, too, enjoy its grades,

Nor deem it an unsound thing—

'Twere just as wise to measure blades,

Because the world's a round thing !

We must have low—we must have high,

And many a niche between them ;

The height may be a tinselled lie—

The men are what's within them !

And mark me, men, a day shall dawn

When neither serge nor ermine,

Nor clime nor class shall make the man—

Nor creed nor worth determine ;

'Twill come—'twill come—and come to stand—

The caste of LOVE-LIGHT STATURE,

When Love alone, where'er your land,

Shall tell the who, and what you're !

God send it soon, in peace—in might,

God guide its rear and vanguard ;

Hurra for Love ! for Light ! for Right !

The mind, and moral standard !

Then, brother man, if all agreed,
 Though live we mayn't to *see* such,
 Let's tack this trifle to our creed,
 And chant a long "So *be* such!"
 All knavish souls, or high or low,
 May conscience-cuffs distress them ;
 But honest hearts, where'er they grow,
 The King of Kingdoms bless them !
 May all who hold a sicklier thought,
 Hold *bitters*, too, to mend it ;
 But bless, O Heaven, the better taught—
 Their teaching, Lord, defend it !



C—. D—. P—.

Oh, C. D. P.! Oh, C. D. P.!
 I hold it neither rude nor wrong
 To grace with thee my melodie—
 An Irish gentleman's my song!
 I've journeyed east, I've journeyed west,
 But ne'er in human face could see
 What woke the music in my breast
 Like something shines in C. D. P.!
 Oh, C. D. P.! Oh, C. D. P.!
 What shone in Adam ere his ban,
 Has gleamed, at times,
 Through sugared rhymes,
 In *thee*, it lights the living man!

In every clime that meets the day,
 From Hecla hoar to Hindostan,
 Each nation shows, as best it may,
 Its own peculiar gentleman!
 Oh, how diverse is clime from clime
 In what is held as grand or vile!
 But he who'd find the soul's sublime,
 Must seek it in our own green isle!
 Our own green isle! Our own green isle!

The *heart o' corn* without the bran !
Whate'er of good
Escaped the flood
Hath *still* the Irish gentleman !

And if the *cream* of Irish worth
Such seeker for himself would see,
Behold our Athens of the North
Reveals it in her C. D. P. !
O, bald initials of a name,
To suffering, as to science, dear,
To you we yield that just acclaim
Your owner's self would blush to hear !
Oh, C. D. P. ! Oh, C. D. P. !
No changeling thou, with now and then ;
For then-and-now
Alike art thou
The cream of Irish gentlemen !

Oh, Isle of many an em'rald hill—
Of brooklet brown and lake so blue !
The quirks of *craft* that pass for *skill*
May crush earth's viler peoples through ;
But, in a spot so blest by God,
Where hill and vale, with lights divine,
Unite to flower the *meanest* sod,
'Tis not by *craft* the *soul* can shine !
Oh, C. D. P. ! Oh, C. D. P. !
By cant and quirk, by plot and plan,
The vulgar soul'd
May win his gold,
But where made *that* the gentleman !

No silken sham, with silvery whine,
To leer and lilt his "Catch who can ! "
His honest front, in every line,
Proclaims, "I, also, am a man ! "
While vision deep, and quick and bright,
Ye'd say therein who runs might read ;

And, freely as the sun gives light,
 So shares he his with all who need !
 Oh, C. D. P.! My C. D. P.!
 How many cheeks, once worn and wan,
 That light of thine
 Hath caused to shine
 And bless the Irish gentleman !

Oh, C. D. P.! Oh, C. D. P.!
 If heaven to earth's petitions bend,
 How bright thy journey here shall be—
 How *more* than *bright* that journey's end !
 For we, from lips now cold and still,
 Such pray'rs have heard for thine and thee,
 As must with oil thine olives fill—
 Yea, *Heavenly* oil, my C. D. P.!
 Oh, C. D. P.! Oh, C. D. P.!
 Our song, that all in smiles began,
 If stayed not here
 Might force a tear
 To blind my Irish gentleman !



T R U E B L U E .

A Right Orange Song of the Modern School.

God bless the darling infant
 That from sadly slavish rest
 Hath at length awaked to action
 On the mighty people's breast !
 God bless young Independence,
 For, although his growth was slow,
 He shall one day, like a tempest,
 Walk the nations to and fro,
 Till each bar to human progress
 In the dust be levelled low !
 Levelled low, boys, levelled low—
 Till each bar to human progress
 In the dust be levelled low !

Too long a brainless puppet,
 Waiting Tricksie's high command,
 Had been held our darling infant
 From his father's horny hand ;
 But, the Trickster's jerk unwary,
 Snapt the leading-cords, and now—
 Oh, never more to Tricksie
 Shall the sovereign peoples bow !
 By the noble blood that mantles
 In each wealth-producer's brow—
 In each brow, my boys, each brow—
 Oh, never more to Tricksie
 Shall our honest thinkers bow !

God bless the Church and bless the State
 While led in all by Thee !
 And bless of William's memory
 Whate'er should blessed be !
 And bless her British Majesty—
 Yea, every heart that's *true*,
 However high or low it be—
 However *green* or *blue* !—
 That throbs with honest freeman force
 When honest work's to do—
 To do, brave hearts, to do ;
 But, ah ! our INDEPENDENCE, boys,
 Pray God to bless THAT, too !

T H E B U R N I N G .

Among the peasantry of the County Antrim, by "The Burning," or "The time of the Burning," is meant the year 1798, the era of the men who were "up."

It is night ! From Antrim's Bridge,
 Where the em'rald flag flew longest,
 Where the spear-men—ridge on ridge—
 Fell, the boldest and the strongest—

Yea, from Antrim's fight he comes,
 Here, his dying pangs to smother,
 Where the red flame rants and roams,
 O'er the roof-tree of his mother !

Though a furnace grow the gale,
 With those fires of desolation ;
 Though a worse than flame his tale,
 Be thou calm in its narration !
 Then, go rest thy darling's head
 On the sacred soil that bore him,
 And the holy moon shall spread
 Her silvery banner o'er him.

It is morn ! The fires of woe
 Down to rosy pencils dwindle ;
 But that cheek of bloody snow
 Never more a smile shall kindle !
 For the widow's lonely hands
 Close the lips her bosom cherished ;
 Holy Freedom ! through all lands
 For thee, thus, what hearts have perished !



"THE NORTH IS UP!"

"The North is up !" The grand old North,
 Through many a star her soul is flashing !
 Her psalmody, while gushing forth
 The music of the spheres surpassing !
 O, leal of heart, and bold of tongue !
 Ye tillmen of old Ulster's valleys,
 The holiest psalms ye've ever sung
 Were—"Death to all our feuds and follies !"

"The North is up !" The North at last—
 So slow to wake, so stern when woken—
 With steady gaze has scanned the past,
 And thus she speaks, or *should have spoken* :

" Too long—too long—beneath a cloud
We've groped and staggered—crept and blundered;
And though our feuds spoke long and loud,
We heard not till results have thundered !

O, land of tears ! O, bleeding land !
Though thine own sons, we've acted rather
Like one whose parricidal hand
Had bruised an unresisting father !
By vulgar wars of creed with creed ;
By hates that, sometimes, God included ;
By acts that warred with every need,
We've been deluding, and deluded !

But great men's rights, whencever grown—
From peaceful bond or red aggression—
We never sought to be o'erthrown—
God bless the right of long possession !
We ask as much : the spots we hold
By right of purchase, or by toiling,
That, clothed with food, both crag and wold,
Should not be nests for legal spoiling.

True, Ulster farmers, now you're taught
How oligarchs so lord it o'er you :
Your poor blind strife the fetters wrought
Which bind you in the land that bore you.
Then up, as *one*, with this your cry :
" Ho ! North and South!—join, friend and brother !
And nothing earthly dare deny
Our '*Tenant-rights*,' or *any other*!"

Be mine the Orange—yours the Green—
But, ah ! as *one*—no more to sever !
This thrilling legend clearly seen :
" The Green and Orange—*One* for ever !"
And still small winds shall preach abroad
From wheresoe'er your crowds assemble :
A People's voice is that of God—
Let disobedience hear and tremble !

THE DUBLIN EXHIBITION OF 1853 :

A LAY OF THE OPENING DAY.

HARK ! how Heaven's blue roof-trees quiver
With a rush of sacred sound ;
Yea, a sweeping storm of music
Like an earthquake rings around.
Shout ! shout for the halls of azure—
For the teeming wealth within—
And the thousand anthem-spirits
O'er thy sluggish waves, Dubh-Linn.
Oh, then, bless the trump and clarion,
And the kingly cavalcade,
And hurra, hurra ! a long hurra
For the light and the might they've made.

As when bursts some prisoned planet
From the cloudy grasp of space,
Breaks thy glory, Mother Erin,
In the startled nations' face.
Not the glory of the mighty
Of the life-devouring brand,
But the triumphs of the genius
Of an up-arising land.
Not the fruits of feud and folly,
On a blood-besprinkled soil,
But the yield of mental battle
On the holy fields of toil.

Ah ! 'twas worth an age of conquests
When the ring of harp and horn
Drove the slumb'rous city's echoes
Pealing skyward yestermorn ;
When the magic Halls were opened
Unto many a glittering guest—
Unto princely friend and stranger,
Under Patrick's cross and crest—
To behold the prisoned spirit
Of our Island's greatness rise,
And display its more than magic
To the million's dazzled eyes.

Here the silken flowret blushes
From the needle—from the beam ;
There the brawny nerve and muscle
Of the iron god of steam ;
Here the canvas weeps, or triumphs,
With the human spirit rife :
There the plaster and the marble
All but quiver into life ;
While amongst the flowers of fancy
And the million weals we view,
Not the least, thy snowy riches,
Briny chambers of Duncrue ! *

Oh ! our Isle, the nations greet thee,
For the day hath come at last,
And though many a tear and triumph
Glow and glisten in thy past,
Let them rest—yea, sink forgotten ;
Hope and have, and toil shall we
Till the light of coming Summers
Rivals this of Fifty-Three—
Till the peoples send their wonders
For thy blessing or thy blame,
Whilst thou root the proudest flower
On the green hill-top of fame.

Yea, the magic Halls are opened,
And the God of nations smiles
On the congregated glories
Of earth's continents and isles ;
And though chiding spirits whisper
“Worship here hath had no part,”
Ah, the *truer* soul of worship
May be voiceless in the heart !
And however well to utter
What 'tis ever well to hear,
Warm and oft the prayer *unspoken*
May salute the Maker's ear !

* Alluding to a specimen forwarded to the Exhibition from the valuable salt-mines, lately discovered at Duncrue, on the property of the Marquis of Downshire.

THE LADY SLAVE.

" She was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters. And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches. But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit; her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them. And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."—*Ezekiel xix. 10—14.*

BROKEN the bridges were,
 Nerveless the vassals all,
 Wildly the lady's hair
 Flapped on the castle's wall ;
 Bound, by her many sons,
 Lone and distressingly,
 She, by her silent guns,
 Sorrowed unceasingly :

" Hope is a wasting thing—
 What hath been else to me—
 Touching her sweetest string,
 But to be false to me.
 Oh ! if the name of ' Slave'
 Ever must follow me,
 Pray ye to Him can save
 At or beyond the grave,
 Lest here the boiling wave
 Swallow me—swallow me ! "

Far were her truer sons,
 Banned and derided men ;
 Fallen her weaker ones,
 Crushed and divided then ;
 Tombed was the loving lord
 Used to caress her there,
 None but a humble bard
 Sought to address her there :

“Lady of loneliness,
Time rears the coral reef;
Patience, deemed powerless,
 Nurses the laurel leaf;
Braid thy broad locks again—
 Look to the Holy One,
He from the strongest chain
 Lifteth the lowly one !”

“Yea—till the heavens fall
 Patience *is* powerless !
Laurels ! ah, yes, but all
 Leafless and flowerless ;
Such, as a bloody rod,
 Follow me—follow me—
Oh, may the gracious God
Pity His under trod,
Lest soon the billow broad
 Swallow me—swallow me !

“Ah ! for my joyous tongue
 Hopeful as any, when
Mine were the warm and young
 Truthful and many men.
Slavish sons !—slavish sons !
 Here are ye !—there are ye !
While o'er my silent guns
Ever the querie runs :
Sighted ones—blighted ones—
 Where are ye ? *where* are ye ?

“Ardour and might ye raised
 Where the cold craven trod ;
Fervour around ye blazed
 Healthful and heaven-broad ;
Oh ! that one weakling blight,
 Aping your burning tones,
E'er should have crossed your light,
Turning my day to night,
Aping your truer might
 Never-returning ones !

“ Oh ! my once knightly bands,
Pliant as osiers now ;
Oh ! for your flashing brands,
Meeker than crosiers now ;
Not to make creed by creed
Love and integrity ;
But, by base word and deed,
Till I the deeplier bleed,
Through my lorn ranks to lead
Race-hate and bigotry.

“ Not that from brands I sought
Freedom or peace to me ;
Not that lips gospel-fraught
I sought should cease to me ;
But, a free limb and soil !—
All who them wished me e'er
Shunning that low turmoil,
First made me foreign spoil
Toiled in their place of toil,
Prayed in their house of pray'r !

“ Keeping the things of God
For their own uses still ;
Sending their shouts abroad,
Staying abuses still ;
Lighting the many hearts,
Love had lit slenderly—
Ever by fits and starts,
And with Lord-loving arts
Touching their weaker parts
Timidly—tenderly.

“ Making the zeal for me
Not a sect-homily ;
Making my children be
One feeling family ;
Struggling till distant lands
Sighed for me—smiled for me—

Down from heart-prayerful hands,
Dropping the boasted brands,
Oh ! my once knightly bands,
Thus had ye toiled for me !

“ Then had some holy ray
Sought my benighted hold,
Gilding your lonely way,
Heart-broken—blighted-souled !—
Oh ! if the name of ‘ Slave ’
Ever must follow me,
Pray ye to Him can save,
Even beyond the grave,
Lest here the boiling wave
Swallow me—swallow me ! ”

“ Queen of my hope and pride,
Oh ! could this heart of mine,
Bleeding, there, by your side,
Ease pang, or part, of thine,
Warm from my living breast,
Wounded and worn for thee,
Red through this heaving vest,
Should it be torn for thee !

“ Oh ! e'er the silver bowl
Break, by the fountain-wave,
Heaven some guiding soul
Send to our lady slave !
Strengthen each truer son
Whom her milk cherisheth,
Till in each selfish one
Selfishness perisheth ! ”

• • • • •
Broken those bridges stare,
Nerveless the vassals all ;
Still doth that lady's hair
Flap on the castle's wall—

Still doth the humble bard
 Wail her condition there—
 Pray ye, “ Oh ! may the Lord
 Hear his petition there ! ”

SWEET COUNSELLINGS.

PART I.—MY MOTHER'S COT.

WE sat alone, the other night—
 I mean my mother's self and I—
 Our hearth was clean, our fire was bright,
 Our glorious candle broad and high :
 The moon, that was upon the sky,
 She slowly swam above our cot,
 And silver-fringed each flower-knot,
 Till, for the Queen of England's lot,
 I'd not have changed that heav'ly spot !

My mother talked of time that's past,
 And something, too, of time to be ;
 She felt, she whispered, wearing fast,
 And, then—what might become of me ?
 I smiled and answered, Time shall see :
 Within our cot—my mother's cot,
 It still hath been a holy spot,
 And Nelly *won't* be God-forgot,
 Though lonely in her lowly cot.

“ Your father, jewel, 's in the mould,
 Where I, you know, must soon be too ;
 And, ah ! the world is very cold
 To lonely girls, how'e'er they do :
 I've found it, darling, far too true !
 Though in your cot—your bowered cot—
 Your lovely, lowly, holy spot—
 You wouldn't bless a lonely lot
 In haughty hall or lowly cot.

“ But whisper, now—our neighbour boys—
 There's surely some you love to see ?

Come, tell your mother—do be wise,
 And quit yer giggling on my knee !
 I've reasons, love, for asking thee :
 Here, in our cot—our fairy cot—
 On this, though lone, still hallowed spot,
 My eye-light might be *world-forgot* ;
 And—life's not all a flower-knot ! ”

I couldn't bear to hear her sighs ;
 But when half-whispering “ Ne'er a one,”
 I thought she'd eat me with her eyes,
 The way she fixed them both upon
 My own—and murmured, “ Willy Bhan ! ”
 “ Oh ! I've a cot”—said I—“ a cot,
 A lovely, lowly, holy spot ;
 And Nelly won't be *world-forgot*,
 Or lonely in her mother's cot ! ”

She kissed my cheek, till wet and warm,
 With “ Bless my child, and bless the lad ; ”
 Then round my neck she locked her arm :
 “ I knew you loved him—guard him, God,
 From slave—from knave—and party clod ! ”
 “ Amen,” said I—“ and I've a cot,
 A bowered, flowered, fairy spot—
 Oh, what's the proudest lonely lot
 To holy love in homely cot ! ”

PART II.—THE PARTY MAN.

THE moonlight left our cottage door,
 And through the back-room window fell,
 Where sat my mother, sick and sore,
 With telling tales I couldn't tell ;
 But she—she learned them far too well—
 Too well you taught her—party man,
 Your hearth's—your creed's—your country's
 ban—
 Our Island's worst, since wounds began
 To seek her soul, 's her party man.

" My child, my jewel"—wildly loud,
 My mother's sobbings struggled through—
 " I'd rather see you in your shroud,
 Than tied to him who, false or true,
 Had sworn to either green or blue.

His creed!—what boots it—caste, or clan?
 His open Irish nature's gone;
 For he, to nurse his secret plan,
 Would hide from God as well as man.

" Your father sprang from Irish soil,
 And owned an Irish heart as true
 As ever yearned to task and toil,
 The way an Irish heart should do,
 To cut our country's fetters through;
 But, dearly as he wished them gone,
 The party emblem never shone
 His blessed bosom deigned to don—
 Ah! well he knew 'twould rust them on.

" Alas! to see some flower, or weed,
 O'er reason reign in boast and blot,
 Less emblem of a cause or creed
 Than foolish hate for—this or that:
 He loves—he hates he knows not what—
 The heartless, soulless, party man—
 The worse than maniac party man—
 To bloodshed, blind-led, crashing on—
 His hearth's—his creed's—his country's ban.

" They battled one day near our cot;
 And, while for peace your father toiled,
 From 'mongst them dashed the murd'rous shot,
 That left your mother widowed, wild,
 And you, my bird, an orphan child.
 Ah! ye who make our green Canaan
 The burning couch of creed and clan—
 A thing to mock—to shun—to ban—
 Know—thousand-tongued's the blood of man!"

{ The moon grew pale, and, like a pearl,
Sat in the rosy ring of dawn,
While I arose, a weeping girl,
And kissed my mother, worn and wan ;
And, while her lips mine lingered on,
I whispered—" Oh ! the party man,
God guard me from the party man,
For, to the heart-strings of our land,
Each party-fool's a foeman's brand ! "



K E N B H A N .

God's breath lonely links with earth and lives,
All else must pass, or perish—only that
Has an abiding place below. All else
Must perish, pass, or change, or at the best,
Like light, but come and go. God's will be done !
Man comes and goes, but cometh not again
To mend the mould'ring tower or crumbling wall
He reared with mind and muscle's might, while yet
He balanced tip-toe on the hair-breadth bridge
Where separates this little Island—Time—
From that vast Continent—Eternity.
He writes his name and deeds on rocks ; Ha, ha !
The white lipped waters kiss the rocks away !
Kenbhan is desolate ! Its castle walls—
Its massive keeps and towers the nibbling years
Have wasted. All is gone, save where yon lines
Of taller verdure veil with tawny tips
Some more enduring fragment of the first
Laid moss. Kenbhan—Kenbhan is desolate !
Around the warrior's hearth and through the long,
Coarse, narrow-bladed grass that wraps his halls,
Like tell-tale life-stains of the past, arise
The lonely sea-pink's wiry-tufted flower !
Where revelled, sang or slept, the man whose arm
Was trained to slay—where rang his chant of death—

Where clanged and clashed his armour, axe and spear,
 Behold the bleating sheep and browsing kine !
 The brave have vanished ! Be it so ! No more
 May Might, with mailed heart and iron heel,
 Have power to drown the still small cry of Right,
 Till each young eagle of the coast grow strong
 And haughty, as of yore, upon the blood—
 The purest, noblest blood, that warmed the isles.
 Kenbhan—Kenbhan, thou'rt desolate ! But, ah,
 Give me the shining sea, the chalky crag—
 The waste—the solitude—so be that Peace,
 As here, be still High Priestess of the scene.
 God willeth peace on earth—God's will be done !

THE S E A .

In rest or rage, beyond all earthly things
 That, moving mirror, not the Incarnate Love,
 Salt Sea, I love thee and thy waves, whether
 In shattered pomp and idly wasted power
 They melt amongst the wallowing mass, or rush
 All wild'ringly sublime, in creamy clouds,
 With low-voiced thunders charged, to hurl their wrath
 Upon the patient rock—or by its base,
 As here, they fret and quiver in their sleep
 Like some young orphan's lips that dream
 Of kisses fresh and odorous of God.
 Here would I live, and love, and look around,
 Where all is wildly beauteous as thine own
 Broad breast of foamy flake and beaming blue.
 Here would I sit while Fancy trims her lamp
 Of many hues, and gray Tradition from
 Her Halls of Cloud adds dreamily her store,
 Till every shadow lingering round Kenbhan,
 That lone rock sternly treads, arrayed in flesh
 And blood, full charged with life and soul.
Ah ! who
 O'er this, our castellated coast hath walked,

'Mid chasm, and crag, with ruins stark and hoar,
All thickly sprinkled, as we've seen with clouds,
A spring-day sky, and felt not, that amidst
A nation's tombs he trod—the tombs—the types
Of power and of a race who, with their long
Dark lines of wintry woes and withering faults,
Possessed a summer-burst of flowering soul,
That we, with all our vaunting, lack to-day.



I'LL NEVER TAKE HIM NOW.

I HEARD her name a thousand times,
And heard it with a smile,
But never saw her shade my sun
Till at her father's stile.
And oh! may Heaven keep my mind !
That sight made seeing dim,
For who—above all human kind—
Could dream of such in him.
Could I think to take him now ?
No ! I'll never take him now !
Might the curses of her broken heart
Not cloud my brightest brow ?
Oh ! mine, oh ! mine 's the bitter part—
I cannot take him now !

I've never slept, but sighed and wept
This weary week and more ;
I've wrought and thought and wrung my heart
Till all was sick and sore,
With thinking on that bursting sigh
And how her forehead fell ;
I know she loves him—so do I,
And maybe twice as well.
But I'll never take him now ;
No, I'll never take him now—
For she might have a blighted soul
And he a broken vow ;

I'll wash my fingers of the whole—
I'll never take him now !

It isn't but I think I am
Deserving more than she—
It isn't that I think his love
Would ever change to me ;
But could I see her bear her blame
Before my very eye,
And maybe pause to curse his name
When stealing weeping by.
Oh ! I'll never take him now—
No, I'll never take him now ;
I'll live—I'll die—I'll range the world—
Whatever God allow—
But were each hair with jewels curled,
I'd never take him now !



A BLESSING.

STAR of thy mother's eye !
King of thy father's joy !
Sweet little baby boy !

Wilt thou in patience hear—
Amidst the close caressing
Of those who love thee dear—
The minstrel breathe a blessing
Upon thine infant ear ?
And may the Hand that formed
Thee, beauteous as thou art—
The Living Truth that warmed
The wavelets of thy heart—
Guide thee to act thy part
As selfless—as sincere !

For thee I'd ask nor aim
The power, wealth, or fame,
Beyond thy worth to claim

Or wisdom to endure ;
But, may the King of Heaven
 To thee a path ensure,
Whence want be ever driven,
 Lest dreader evils lure ;
 Not dark, nor yet too bright,
 That when thy walk be done,
Thy soul may be as white
 As when 'twas first begun—
 For walking *much* in sun
 Leaves whiteness insecure.

With symmetry of form,
With iron nerve and arm,
With health robust and warm,
 Be chastening alloy ;
A heart of holy feeling
 For mankind low and high ;
A soul to God appealing
 In misery and joy ;
 A nerve to brave the worst
 When Honour points before ;
A faith to count accurst
 The tempter at thy door,
 And grace o'er sin to soar,
 Be thine, sweet baby boy !

And I would ask for thee
An eye that yearns to see
Each beauteous mystery
 The God of Nature sends,
With light to hallow solely
 What to His glory tends ;
And Reason, bowing lowly,
 Where'er her footing ends :
 The humblest leaf may light
A lamp within the mind—
 The humblest leaf may blight

What Heaven hath designed
 To bloom amongst its kind
 When earth with ashes blends.

But though thy soul admire
 Those cloven tongues of fire,
 They paint around the lyre
 Like glowing glory-rain.

The wing of mercy shield thee
 From song's bewildering chain,
 For should it honours yield thee,
 Its first—its last, is pain.

The noblest ever sang song
 Met blame his first reward,
 But, save in finding tongue
 For feeling, *be* the bard,
 For blessed be the Lord,
 Heart-feeling's not in vain.

Nor Song were so unblest,
 Dare Nature stand confest,
 With honest, open breast,
 And own the seed she bore ;
 But save she shew a bower,
 Bedewed with *sweat* and gore,
 Till every shrub and flower
 Bear Californian ore,
 By each base, brainless slave—
 Whose creed—whose god is gain ;
 But who, so much the knave,
 Can cheat the felon's chain—
 She's branded as insane
 With all her spirit lore.

Oh, thus, thou blessed one,
 Howe'er the soul o'er-run,
 The minstrel's pathway shun,
 By martyrs' feet so trod,
 Whose prints, though burning letters,
 That show each thought of God,

Bear flowers that be fetters
On Labour's sterner sod :
But other paths appear
On which, if them thou find,
Although they may not rear
A rose-tree through thy mind,
Thou mayest aid thy kind
'Neath many a weary load.

And ever may the powers,
Which sheet this earth of ours,
With diverse lights and flowers,
Upon thy soul impress,
That meekness to each being—
That grief o'er *all* distress,
Which claim with the All-seeing
A kindred zeal to bless :
Contempt of living thing,
Doth in itself contain,
A self-envenom'd sting,
That blights its owner's brain,
While God himself 's *his* gain
Who maketh mis'ry less.

And may the King of kings
Weave with thy young heart-strings,
Above all other things,
Save how thy soul may stand,
A love—yea, a devotion,
For thy dear motherland,
The green heart of the ocean—
The beautiful—the banned.
The worn by native fraud—
By bigot zeal and sway,
Oh ! may she, next to God,
Be thine by night—by day—
Till righted when she may,
She bless thine aiding hand !

Be all thy spirit's food,
 God's glory and her good,
 Till calmed her fevered blood,
 And drowned each factious coal
 That wastes the soul within her,
 That bars her from the goal
 United loves could win her,
 Till judgment thunders roll.
 Through honour, blame or ban,
 Be such thy might's employ,
 And every *truthful* man
 Beneath the holy sky
 Shall bless thee, baby boy,
 As I've done from my soul!

KATHLEEN BAN ADAIR.

THE battle-blood of Antrim
 Had not dried on Freedom's shroud,
 And the rosy ray of morning
 Was but struggling through the cloud;
 When, with lightning foot and deathly cheek,
 And wildly-waving hair,
 O'er grass and dew, scarce breathing, flew
 Young Kathleen ban Adair.

Behind, her native Antrim
 In a reeking ruin lies ;
 Before her, like a silvery path,
 Kells' sleeping waters rise :
 And many a pointed shrub has pierced
 Those feet so white and bare ;
 But oh, thy heart is deeper rent,
 Young Kathleen ban Adair !

And Kathleen's heart, but one week since,
 Was like a harvest morn,
 When hope and joy are kneeling
 Round the sheaf of yellow corn :

But where's the bloom then made her cheek
So ripe, so richly fair ?
Thy stricken heart has fed on it,
Young Kathleen ban Adair.

And now she gains a thicket,
Where the sloe and hazel rise ;
But why those shrieking whispers,
Like a rush of worded sighs ?
Ah, low and lonely bleeding,
Lies a wounded patriot there ;
And every pang of his is thine,
Young Kathleen ban Adair !

“ I see them—oh, I see them,
In their fearful red array ;
The yeomen, love ! the yeomen come—
Arise ! away, away !
I know, I know they mean to track
My lion to his lair ;
Ah, save thy life ! ah, save it,
For thy Kathleen ban Adair !”

“ May heaven shield thee, Kathleen,
When my soul has gone to rest ;
May comfort rear her temple
In thy pure and faithful breast :
But fly them—oh ! to fly them
Like a bleeding, hunted hare ;
No ! not to free dear Erin
For my Kathleen ban Adair.

“ I loved—I love thee, Kathleen,
In my bosom’s warmest core ;
But Erin, oh, my Erin,
I have loved thee even more ;
And death, I feared him little,
When I drove him through their square,
Nor now, though eating at my heart,
My Kathleen ban Adair !”

With trembling hand his blade he grasped,
 Yet dark with spoiler's blood ;
And then, as though with dying bound,
 Once more erect he stood ;
But scarcely had he kissed that cheek,
 So pale, so purely fair,
When flashed their bayonets round him
 And his Kathleen ban Adair !

Then up arose his trembling,
 Yet his dreaded hero's hand ;
And up arose, in struggling sounds,
 His cheer for motherland :
A thrust—a rush—their foremost falls :
 But ah, Sweet Mercy !—there !
Thy lover's quivering at thy feet,
 Young Kathleen ban Adair !

But, wretched men, what recked he then
 Your heartless taunts and blows,
When from his lacerated heart
 Ten dripping bayonets rose ?
And maiden, thou with frantic hands,
 What boots it kneeling there ?
To fling the winds thy yellow locks,
 Young Kathleen ban Adair.

Oh, what were sighs, or shrieks, or swoons,
 But shadows of the rest,
When torn was frantic Kathleen
 From the slaughtered hero's breast :
And hardly had his last-heaved sigh
 Grown cold upon the air,
When oh ! of all but life they robbed
 Young Kathleen ban Adair.

But whither now does Kathleen fly ?
 Already is she gone ;
Thy water, Kells, looks tempting fair,
 And thither speeds she on.

A moment on its blooming banks
 She kneels in hurried prayer ;
 Now in its wave she finds a grave—
 Poor Kathleen ban Adair !



MY KALLAGH DHU ASTHORE.

AGAIN the flowery feet of June
 Have tracked our cottage side ;
 And o'er the waves the timid moon
 Steals, smiling like a bride :
 But what were June or flowers to me,
 Or waves, or moon, or more,
 If evening came and brought not thee,
 My Kallagh dhu asthore !

Let others prize their lordly lands,
 And sceptres gemmed with blood ;
 More dear to me the honest hands
 That earn my babes their food :
 And little reck we queens or kings
 When daily labour's o'er ;
 And by the evening embers sings
 My Kallagh dhu asthore.

And when he sings, his every song
 Is sacred freedom's own :
 And like his voice his arm is strong,
 For labour nursed the bone :
 And then his step, and such an eye !
 Ah, fancy ! touch no more ;
 My spirit swims, in holy joy,
 O'er Kallagh dhu asthore !

His voice is firm, his knee is proud
 When pomp's imperious tone
 Would have the free-born spirit bowed,
 That right should bow alone ;

For well does Kallagh know his due,
 Nor ever seeks he more ;
 Would heaven mankind were all like you,
 My Kallagh dhu asthore !

And Kallagh is an Irishman
 In sinew, soul, or bone ;
 Not e'en the veins of old Slieveban
 Are purer than his own :
 The wing of woe has swept our skies,
 The foreign foe our shore,
 But stain or change thy race defies,
 My Kallagh dhu asthore !

What wonder, then, each word he said
 Fell o'er my maiden day,
 Like breathings o'er the cradle bed
 Where mothers kiss and pray ;
 Though dear your form, your cheek, and eye,
 I loved those virtues more,
 Whose bloom nor ills nor years destroy,
 My Kallagh dhu asthore !

Oh could this heart, this throbbing thing,
 Be made a regal chair,
 I'd rend its every swelling string,
 To seat you, Kallagh, there ;
 And oh, if honest worth alone
 The kingly bauble bore,
 No slave wert thou, my blood, my bone,
 My Kallagh dhu asthore !



M Y U L I C K.

My Ulick is sturdy and strong,
 And light is his foot on the heather ;
 And truth has been wed to his tongue
 Since first we were talking together :

And though he is lord of no lands,
 Nor castle, nor cattle, nor dairy,
 My boy has his health and his hands,
 And a heart-load of love for his Mary ;
 And what should a maiden wish more ?

One day at the heel of the eve,
 I mind it was snowing and blowing ;
 My mother was knitting, I b'lieve,
 For me, I was singing and sewing ;
 My father the "news" had looked o'er,
 And there he sat humming—"We'll wake 'em!"
 When Ulick stepped in at the door
 As white as the weather could make him—
 Oh, love never cooled with a frost !

He shook the snow out of his frieze,
 And drew up a chair by my father ;
 My spirits leaped up to my eyes,
 To see the two sitting together :
 They talked of our Isle and her wrongs,
 Till both were as mad as starvation ;
 When Ulick sung three or four songs,
 And closed with "Hurrah for the *Nation*!"
 Oh ! Ulick's an Irishman still.

My father caught hold of his hand,
 Their hearts melted into each other :
 While tears that she could not command,
 Broke loose from the eyes of my mother :
 "Our freedom !" she sighed, "wirrastrue !
 A woman can say little in it,
 But had it to come by you two,
 I've a guess of the way we would win it—
 'Twould not be by weeping, I'm sure !"

And Ulick can think as a man,
 And speak when he meets a deceiver ;
 For Ulick would knuckle to none,
 For sake of their buttons and beaver :

And though as a midsummer night
 His soul is as mild, if ye raise it,
 He'll make ye slip out of his light,
 Though it be his *cailin* that says it—
 Oh, Ulick, there's pith in your arm !

He told me that night, when alone,
 He'd scrape up a trifle together,
 To knock up a hut of our own,
 Or furnish a "Take" if I'd rather :
 And e'er he would own to depart,
 His Mary, as proud as a lady,
 Confessed she would give him her heart—
 She might when he had it already.
 Oh, Ulick's the light of my eye !

—————
DAN MACFEE.

His eye was blue, his brow was white,
 His cheeks like maiden's ripely blushing ;
 His locks like waves of morning light,
 From heaven's golden fountain gushing :
 His heart was young, his arm was strong,
 And in his soul was Dan the hero ;
 And none felt more his country's wrong,
 From Cushendall to princely Tara.
 For Erin's ills, on Antrim's hills,
 What healing hopes my Dannie cherished ;
 And recreant now shall Antrim bow,
 And own her soul of pride has perished.

But bold of thought was Dan MacFee :
 For tyrants all, he fancied Heaven
 Had but *permitted* here till we
 Our bonds had felt, and wished them riven.
 And he who'd shun the glorious goal,
 Where Hope his shattered chains stood waving,
 Was more, he said, of worthless soul,
 Than they who crushed it by enslaving.

For Erin's ills, on Antrim's hills,
 What healing hopes my Dannie cherished !
 And Antrim says 'tis not in days,
 Nor years, nor time, to prove they've perished !

At Whitehouse shore he lit a flame ;
 At Antrim bridge he did not cower ;
 At Saintfield signed he Erin's name,
 And would you believe—he wrote it " power." "
 But bold of tongue was Dan MacFee,
 For bleeding o'er his chieftain's feather,
 He sighed, " No king !—no king but He
 Who crowned Slieve-dhu with curling heather ! "
 But Whitehouse shore he lights no more,
 For by his grave knelt strangers grieving ;
 And yet the coal that fired his soul
 Keeps countless hearts this moment heaving !

BRYAN BAN.

THE hills their snowy white at last
 Have changed to gowns of glittering green ;
 And I this while have changed as fast,
 For oh, I'm not the girl I've been :
 My sister hints of flaxen hair,
 And laughs, and calls me queen of woe ;
 I'm sure these curls are far from fair,
 What can she mean by talking so ?
 I do not love—oh, no I don't !
 Yet for the world I could not say
 What makes this heart—a shame upon't !
 Keep heaving, heaving, night and day.

I rose this morn at early dawn,
 To let my washing get the dew ;
 When who came up but Bryan Ban,
 Saying, " Sleepless Brideen, is it you ?

You've ta'en a life—I know it, Brid ;
 Hard for you, girl, to rest in bed !”
I think I frowned—I'm sure I did,
 For Bryan turned away his head.
 I do not love—oh no, I don't !

I tried to go—I tried to speak—
 But try was all—I could no more ;
I drew the ringlets o'er my cheek
 To hide the burning red it bore.
Then round my waist his arm he flung,
 And said so sweetly, “ Not yet gone ! ”
That for my life my stupid tongue
 Could only say—“ Ah, Bryan Ban ! ”
 But do I love ? I'm sure I don't.

And Bryan Ban has locks like light,
 And eyes that shame the water clear ;
And meet him morn, or noon, or night,
 There's still a word you'd like to hear :
For his is not the muddy mind
 That guides the craven's heart and hand ;
And Bryan loves all human kind,
 Unless the wrongers of our land.
 But do I love ? I surely don't !

To dream of love, and I so young,
 I know would grieve my mother sore ;
Not yet sixteen ! she might be wrong—
 I rather think I'm something more.
But let that pass, if Bryan wait
 Till I look round a year or so,
I may be brought to love him yet—
 I mean for anything I know !
 I do not love ! I think I don't !
 But this I know, from dark till dawn,
This heaving heart, the sorrow on't !
 Has ne'er a thought but Bryan Ban !

CLOUGH-DHUINE-AUGHY.

INSCRIBED TO MY DEAR FRIEND, JAMES M'KOWEN,

In consideration of the enthusiastic estimation in which he holds the traditional legends of his country.

Convenient to the village of Clough, says the legend, in the lower part of the County Antrim, stood at one time a large circular stone, known for many miles round that neighbourhood by the name of "Clough-dhuine-aughy;" and possessing not only the power of foretelling events, but also of declaring the exact spot where stolen or missing property could be found. Many and amusing are the anecdotes related by the peasantry concerning it, from amongst which the writer has selected the following, not only for its brevity, but because it speaks the character of its own times, much better, perhaps, than anything he could say on the subject:—
"An old man, with hasty feet and an anxious heart, came to Clough-dhuine to inquire after a mare which he had lost, but being too impatient to go the third time round it—an observance essential to the obtaining of a clear and comprehensive answer—he halted at the second turn, and received the following reply, which was given in a tone of voice that said very little for the democratic principles of the very hard-hearted prophet: 'Old man, with the bald head and scandalous tongue, your mare is at the bog below, and has lost her foal.'"

YOUNG NORAH had cheeks were so ripe and so red,
You'd have thought they were roses just peeping
through snow;
And sure such two eyes never shone in a head—
As bright as the sun and as black as a crow.

And a lip had young Norah, or rather a pair,
With a tinge, through the world, like the eyelids of morn;
And then when she smiled, had you not taken care,
She was down on your heart, like the slap of a thorn.

And Norah had lovers, a dozen or more,
The pick of Glenrevel and Magherabwee;
But her heart was as cold as the wind in a door,
To them all, but young laughing-eyed Cormac Magee.

And Cormac was comely in figure and face,
With a heart like a babe's, though as stout as a tree;
And at wrestle, or dance, or the leap, or the race,
Oh, the winds could but creep with you, Cormac Magee.

Now, warm out of sleep, over Umberban's bowers,

Young morning peeped out from his windows of flame,
To call home the dew and awaken the flowers,

But two of earth's purest were up when he came.

And the yellow ray danced with the turf-cutting spade,

That kept time to the laugh of young Cormac Magee ;
For his soul seemed to sing in the smile of the maid—

Oh, how dark were I wanting you, Norah Machree !

And he whispers : " Now, Norah, ye imp of my heart !

Won't you meet me in Clough on the gooseberry fair ? "

" Is it meet ye ! " said Norah, her face turned apart ;

" And till all would be near over you wouldn't be
there."

" And is it your Cormac would speak to deceive ?

Well now, by a word we can settle it all ;

Will you wager a kiss, and the sweetest you have,

That my hand won't be first on the garrison wall ? "

Young Norah looked up, and young Norah looked down,

Ay, and thrice she essayed ere she ventured to speak,
While her little hand curtained an ill-managed frown,

Deeply dipped in the dimples that brightened her
cheek.

" And is it you, Cormac, would trifle it so ?

And you'd have me to wager what is not my own ;

Sure I have not a kiss in the world, you should know,

That has not been promised to Shemus M'Keown."

Now words are but wind, though the wind is not words,

And Cormac grew pale as she filtered them forth ;

For they entered his heart, and they sung through its
chords,

Like that life-eating minstrel, the blast of the north !

And his cheek sought a rest on the top of his spade,

Where all mutely he mused for a moment or two ;

Till he tossed off a tear, that a thousand things said,

With a warmth which avowed they were bitterly true.

" Ah, Norah ! ah, Norah ! and was it for this
 That I've wept, when the mists hid your home from my
 view ?

Could your lip have been warm with a poor boddagh's kiss,
 When Cormac was thinking of angels and you ?

" It was not your Shemus, the manly thing said,
 When we talked of the bog yester eve at the door ;
 And the boys said they'd come, every man with his spade,
 As Norah was young, and her father was poor.

" It was Cormac—a-cushla ! who said, with a hush,
 That if heaven would health and a sunny day send,
 Not a star should play wink in the face of Slieverush,
 Till himself would have raised every clod on its end.

" Cold Skerry has rocks, ay, and rock-hearted maids,
 Sliveneenleigh has its clouds of the dark-walking dew ;
 And I'd rather be found in its false feather-beds*
 Than be one moment longer, false Norah, with you !"

You have seen how morn sickens when musty old night
 Shakes his last shattered cloud full of spite o'er its
 dawn ;

But ye saw not the eye, so love-botheringly bright,
 That sickened, when Norah found Cormac was gone.

Nor heard ye the swell of her heart-sweeping shriek,
 As it rose, wrung, and trembled in withering woe ;
 Nor saw ye the tear, nor the grief-smitten cheek,
 That rivalled in paleness her bosom of snow.

But he's gone—ay, he's gone, and no sunbeam as fleet ;
 Show the snow of your cheeks to the rocks of Kurkee ;
 For they'll come, weeping girl, and lie down at your feet,
 Ere you turn for one moment, young Cormac Magee.

Twice since has the moon worn herself to a shade,
 But morning or evening no Cormac appears ;
 And Autumn and Norah have sprinkled the glade,
 The first with her leaves and the last with her tears.

*Quagmires, by the peasantry termed feather-beds.

But whose is the foot slides the foam from the rill,
Where the iron-browed tower the mist's frowning
through ;
Ha ! yellow-haired morning peeps over the hill,
As if to declare, altered Norah, 'tis you.

" And so plain as I saw him last night !" she exclaims,
" Plucking *ceneabhan* tufts for the young pigeons' nest ;
But oh, wirrasthrue ! there is little in dreams—
It is Clough-dhuine-aughy must tell me the rest."

And Clough-dhuine-aughy, the mystical stone,
That stern rocky prophet, whose murmur is truth,
Can only be questioned at morn, and alone—
But sweet are its whispers to virtue and youth.

And as white and as light as the snow tips the grass,
Are her feet, stealing over the heather and dew ;
For thrice round the gray stony seér she must pass,
Ere, Cormac, one word can be uttered of you.

It is done—she has paused—oh, the world for some aid !
See ! her breath comes and goes, like a babe's on the
knee :

And she spoke, or an angel instead of her said,
" Dear Clough-dhuine-aughy, where's Cormac Magee ?"

Like the sigh that a seraph, heart-teeming with joy,
Might have breathed through his harp when its num-
bers ran sweet,

Sailed a voice o'er her ear, " Ah, a-cushla ! he's nigh,
For he lies in the clay, not a perch from your feet ! "

" In the clay ! in the clay ! are you gone evermore ?
Wirra Cormac ! oh ! Cormac come, come at my call !"
And she sank upon something that whispered " Asthore ! "
But was it the seer ? not at all—not at all !

For she felt a warm breast heaving under her brow,
And she felt o'er her check swim the sweetest of sighs,
And she heard a kind voice say—" We never part now !
But Clough-dhuine-aughy has told you no lies."

It was Cormac himself—from a cave, not a grave—
And he said he had listened behind the black thorn,
When she told Maurian Moor if she lived she would have
To slip towards Clough by the dawn of the morn.



ONE OF THE TWO.

OH, the banner of Ulster is blue,
And our meadows and mountains are green ;
And our hearts, shall we say they're untrue,
No, no, but a wandering we've been !
And there's one healing thing we can do,
Join the shout for repeal and the queen ;
And a banner of national hue,
Of Erin's own emerald hue,
To wave over the brother-made few !

Shall we frown on the green of the glen,
That enriches our hearts' ruddy spring ?
No, up and together, like men !
From the depths of your glowing souls sing.
We are sons of one mother—oh, then,
It would not be the blood-varnished wing
Of a foul foreign vulture again,
(Reeking red from our slaughter again,)
That should flap o'er the green of our glen !

Hold each creed as a soul-saving guest,
And your knees bow in prayer where ye please ;
If the spirit but kneel in the breast,
There will be little warring o'er knees :
For of altars the heart makes the best,
But our feuds make its sacrifice freeze,
Ay, and even religion a jest,
A foolish, a slave-making jest,
That has plumed the proud foreigner's crest !

Oh, the ice from your stern bosoms fling,
 As the sons of one mother should do :
 And the roof-tree of heaven shall ring
 With our shouts for the " banner of blue ;"
 And our hearts to each other shall cling,
 And we'll make a band fearless and true :
 Oh, brothers ! that one holy thing—
 That chain-breaking, man-making thing,
 And the soul of young Erin shall sing !

Then hurrah for the green of the glen !
 And sing "oh, for the banner of blue !"
 And hurrah for the hearts of the men,
 Who would toil to make one of the two ;
 And to raise it as proudly as when
 In the noon-blaze of freedom both flew !
 And hurrah for the spirit lived then !
 The chain-spurning soul that lived then !
 Shout, shout, till it quickens again !

IRISH FRIEZE.

'Tis not the coat, 'tis not its hue,
 Its texture, cut, or red, or blue,
 The might of mind can show,
 Or tell the deeds the arm can do
 For mankind's weal or woe :
 'Tis not the brightest gleaming brand
 That marks the truest, bravest hand,
 When slaves or tyrants take their stand
 To save or sink a ruined land ;
 Oh, no ! believe me, no !

Howe'er the gilding hand of art
 May varnish each unseemly part,
 Or deck the outward bowl ;
 That wonder-working thing, the heart,
 Or makes or mars the whole :

For who the foamy mountain sees,
 When all unmarshalled by the breeze,
 The warrior billow rests at ease ;
 And so, beneath a coat of frieze,
 May rest a hero's soul.

'Twas mountain might in frieze arrayed,
 That first and last, on death's parade,

 In Erin's cause was seen ;
 Till even vict'ry turned dismayed

 From ruin's reeking sheen :
 And witness mute, but proudly true,
 To this our island o'er we view,
 In mounds of more than verdure's hue,
 With brighter flowerets glancing through
 That foe-blood nourish'd green !

Oh ! bold and true of heart and hand,
 When vengeance whirled her dripping brand,

 And tyrants sought their knees ;
 And flags and shouts for fatherland

 Electrified the breeze ;
 'Twas rustic chiefs that foremost led
 The foremost feet where foemen fled ;
 And oh ! may heaven be their bed,
 Who thus have fought, and thus have bled
 In coats of Irish frieze !

THE MINSTREL OF MALLOW.*

OH ! truest when tried

 Was the minstrel of Mallow ;
 Our beacon, our pride,

 Was the minstrel of Mallow :

But Erin weeps wild over high place and hollow,
 For shrouded and cold is her Minstrel of Mallow ;

* THOMAS DAVIS, "our guide and our prophet"—he who gave to Ireland a new literature, and poured the last drop of his young heart on the altar of her regeneration.

Weep, weep for the spirit that, lava-like, dashing
 In music, in might, and in brilliancy flashing,
 Rushed forth from his lyre so proudly, so fleetly—
 Ah, who shall e'er strike it to touch it so sweetly ?
 Sweet harp of green Erin, how changed since he found thee !
 The tears of a nation that then hung around thee,
 Like death-telling bells o'er thy sorrowing wire,
 He changed into lamp-lights of freedom's own fire :
 He melted the hearts of the frigid and frozen,
 Then rose on their sighs to the land of the chosen.

A nation's in dole
 For the minstrel of Mallow ;
 Her sunlight, her soul,
 Was the minstrel of Mallow !

Oh, fair be thy visions, and bright as the halo
 That lives in thy numbers, sweet minstrel of Mallow.

As day in the sky
 O'er the minstrel of Mallow,
 A far-seeing eye
 Had the minstrel of Mallow :

He traced out a track that the true man shall follow—
 Oh, light to the soul of the minstrel of Mallow !
 Proud, proud be his name in his country's story,
 He fell not in battle, yet fell for her glory.
 'Tis holy to sing of the good and true-hearted—
 'Tis soothing to sing how the Minstrel departed ;
 Look ye ! when o'er Mallow the wild tempest flieth,
 And o'er the broad blue of the firmament lieth
 The cloven-cloud temples, where slumbered the thunder,
 The spirit they cradled hath rent them asunder :
 And thus hath the temple of clay that hath perished
 Been rent by the might of the lightnings it cherished,

And loving and young
 Was the minstrel of Mallow ;
 And sweet was the tongue
 Of the minstrel of Mallow !

He tilled and he toiled at the heart that lay fallow ;
 Oh, fair be thy harvest, sweet minstrel of Mallow !

Then make ye a grave
For the minstrel of Mallow,
Where brightly may wave
O'er the minstrel of Mallow,
The green of the isle that his heart loved to hallow—
Oh, it lived in the soul of the minstrel of Mallow !
Ah, his was the soul for a nation to labour ;
Ah, his was the hand for the harp or the sabre.
Sweet light of the lyre, by tyrants undaunted,
'Twas thee, such as thee, that our motherland wanted !
And bright o'er thy grave as her tearful eye flashes,
Thy name in her heart, in her bosom thine ashes,
She'll teach e'en her babes to look proud on the halo
Was flung round her head by the minstrel of Mallow ;
Till Freedom's pure spirit, in heaven's own numbers,
Shall sing o'er the spot where her gifted one slumbers.
Oh, fair is the land
Of the minstrel of Mallow !
A fostering hand
Had the minstrel of Mallow :
He tilled and he toiled at the heart that lay fallow ;
Light, light to thy spirit, sweet minstrel of Mallow !

EIGHTY-TWO.

HURRAH for the hills of our own green land,
Our own green land !
Hurrah for the hills of our own green land,
And her lakes of rolling blue !
And hurrah for the hearts of her gallant band,
Her gallant band !
Hurrah for the hearts of her gallant band,
The fearless and the true !
Whose light, whose might is Erin's own,
In soul, in heart, in blood and bone ;
Who live for her and her alone—
The club of Eighty-two !

The club, the club, the deathless club,
The club of Eighty-two !
 Oh should our foes
 By force propose
This ardour to subdue,
 May every hand
 Uplift a brand
With the might of *Eighty-two* !

And now we're told of English wrath,
 Of English wrath !
And now we're told of English wrath,
 Let cowards fawn and fear !
For we have walked in worse than death,
 In worse than death,
Ay, we have walked in worse than death,
 For many a bitter year :
And should the threatened tempest burst,
We feel, we know our soil has nursed
An Irish *twig*, and none the worst,
 To break a tyrant's spear.
 A *club*, a *club*, a glorious *club*,
The *club* of Eighty-two !
 Oh should our foes
 By force propose
This ardour to subdue,
 May every hand
 Uplift a brand
With the might of *Eighty-two* !

Then hurrah for the club of Eighty-two,
 Of Eighty-two !
Then hurrah for the club of Eighty-two,
 The guardians of our Isle !
And hurrah for the hearts or green or blue,
 Or green or blue !
Hurrah for the hearts or green or blue,
 That love their native soil !

But dark may be the wretches' hearth,
 Who darkly looks on his native earth,
 Or slight the land of his father's birth
 For a tyrant's frown or smile.

Keep from the club, the faithful club,
 All hearts like his untrue :
 Then should your foes
 Around ye close
 Your ardour to subdue,
 Each trusty hand
 Shall wield a brand
 With the might of *Eighty-two* !



THE MAGIC OF ERIN.

HAVE we magic in Erin ? yes, oh yes !
 Have we magic in Erin ? yes !
 And the magic lies
 In the full ripe eyes,
 And the lips 'twere heaven to kiss, to kiss,
 And the lips 'twere heaven to kiss :
 'Tis a wondrous magic this !

Have we magic in Erin ? yes, oh yes !
 Have we magic in Erin ? yes !
 And the fearful charm
 Of the mighty arm
 Is a spell right rare to miss, to miss,
 Is a spell right rare to miss :
 'Tis a wondrous magic this !

But ye daughters of Erin ! do, oh do !
 Ye daughters of Erin ! do
 Keep the charm that lies
 In your lips and eyes
 For the hearts that are warm and true, oh true !
 For the hearts that are warm and true
 To their country's cause and you !

And ye heroes of Erin ! hear, oh hear !
 Ye heroes of Erin, hear !
 There's an honoured grave
 For the vanquished brave,
 And the balm of a maiden's tear, oh tear !
 And the balm of a maiden's tear,
 All to hallow the patriot's bier !

SONG OF DEARBHORGIL,

THE FALLEN WIFE OF O'RUARK, PRINCE OF BREFFNI.

I LOOKED on the helmet, I looked on the shield,
 As my fugitive foot left the hall ;
 I looked on the trophies of many a field,
 And I thought on the lord of them all :
 And I felt—oh, I felt what I may not declare,
 Nor a woman feel aught of again ;
 But if mortal on earth ever tasted despair,
 Mine, mine was a draught of it then !

And my bosom beat quick, and the spirit remorse
 Waved its wing o'er the cloud on my soul ;
 But the spoiler was there, and arrested its course
 Ere I tasted its faith-saving dole :
 For he painted the past with a pencil of flame,
 When our hearts and their wishes were one ;
 And he kissed off the tear that had started in shame,
 At the deed was about to be done.

And oh ! 'twas a moment of death amid life,
 While virtue yet clung to my breast ;
 I felt as a woman, I felt as a wife,
 But how could I utter the rest :
 Oh, my spouse ! if thou wouldst, I would wash the disgrace
 From thy name and this bosom of sin ;
 And my crime, ay, my crime, O Macmurchad, I'd trace
 In the stream that's polluted within.

For wild through the depths of my spirit this night,
 Whirls the music of wringing despair ;
 And dark o'er the bloom of my heart sweeps the blight,
 That its own guilty wishes brought there :
 And the heavens may ban, and my Breffni pursue,
 And a nation may thunder her curse ;
 But the deepest, the darkest, the worst they can do,
 Were as nought to Dearbhorgil's remorse !

SONG OF AN OLD SOLDIER.

Oh, your eyes were the springs of love and light,
 The love and the light of the world to me ;
 And dark as the frown of the winter night,
 When the storm is pluming his wings for flight,
 Were the curls that danced on the dazzling white
 Of your neck and your brow, Acushla Machree.
 And rich is the stain of the western cloud,
 When the evening sun melts over Lough Neagh,
 But your cheek was as rich in its rosy shroud
 When you whispered "I'm yours!" till my soul grew
 proud ;
 And the voice of our bridal joy rung loud
 In our hearts and our home, Acushla Machree !
 But, alas for my home and my weeping bride,
 Black, black was their war and their ballot to me ;
 For they tore and they bore me from your side,
 And all but the spirit, dear wife, they tied
 To follow that banner they lately had dyed
 In the blood of our bravest Acushla Machree !
 And my heart they crushed—while they drove and drove,
 Till they sent me a volunteer over the sea ;
 While the prayer with my lip for an utterance strove,
 That a grave should be mine with a billow above,
 Ere a red-handed murderer, Connacht, should rove
 Through the wars of an alien, Acushla Machree !

And I saw where the flower of Ireland bled ;
 But darker, asthore, 'twas our lot to see,
 For we sprinkled the fields with our reeking red,
 Till we nourished a wreath for a stranger's head,
 While poison and death were the odours it shed
 O'er us and o'er ours, Acushla Machree !

But the darkest cloud ever dimmed the sky,
 The veil of a glorious light may be ;
 Ay, and darker grow as the hour draws nigh,
 When a bound and a burst and the curtain's by,
 And freedom and light meet eye to eye :
 Oh swift be their meeting, Acushla Machree !

And what though our locks be touched with white—
 The sun of your eye is not set or away ;
 And I'll rest at eve in its softer light,
 While I lead our boy through a field of fight,
 And nourish and nurse his longing might,
 For the hope of a happier day !

And oh, were it Heaven's good-will to make
 The watchword of nations be—" Up and be free!"
 Methinks that another farewell I would take ;
 For I know—oh, I know, for fatherland's sake,
 You would whisper, asthore ! though your heart should
 break,
 May heaven be with you, Acushla Macroidhe !

THE YOUNG BRIDE OF FREEDOM.

Oh, wreath her a garland right meet for a queen ;
 And braid ye her robes with the gold and the green :
 For a spring-bloom of beauty her brow hath burst o'er,
 And she walks in the glory and brightness of yore.
 Then bring ye the maidens in silken array ;
 And bring ye the minstrels before her to play ;
 And bring ye the guardsmen with sabre and lance,
 For the young Bride of Freedom goes forth to the dance !

And proud is her step where the banners are high ;
And proud is the spirit enthroned in her eye ;
And proudly to foemen defiance she flings,
From a tongue that as sweet as a bright angel sings.

She looks on the hills where the war-horses browse ;
She sees them illumined with the smiles of her spouse ;
She sees his broad banners in gorgeous advance ;
Lead on, virgin Erin, lead on to the dance !

And hear, oh, ye beacons ! all beaming with light ;
And hear, oh, ye mountains ! all teeming with might ;
And hear, oh, ye nations, away o'er the deep :
Lo ! the queen of the waters hath risen from sleep.

Then bring ye the maidens in silken array ;
And bring ye the minstrels before her to play ;
And bring ye the guardsmen with sabre and lance,
For the young Bride of Freedom goes forth to the dance.



TO THE MEMORY OF A MAN.

A. M.

GONE !—gone for aye ! At length his name
Among the CEASED-TO-BE appears !
The noble brow—the iron frame—
Have withered in the grasp of years.
He toiled amongst the first that 'rose
To heal what seemed a sickly State ;
He rests, to-day, the last of those
Who stamped their times with deathless date.
Honour to truth—what else ye blame !
In flower and fruit, he kept the same !

A jewell'd breast, with honours due,
To him whose merits such may win !
Our Andrew's breast was jewell'd too,
But wore the holier gems within :

None ever met a gentler heart—
 A nobler soul—a bolder arm !
 Amidst his kind he stood apart—
 A man, in spirit, speech and form !
 A man who never bowed a knee
 At the altar of Expediency.

A man, in all, by men required :
 A man of truth, when truth was rare ;
 A man of thew that never tired,
 In dragging Wrong from out his lair.
 His foot was foremost, early—late—
 Whenever Right had work to do ;
 His voice was sagest in debate,
 O'er all that only sages knew ;
 One weakness, haply, to him clung ;
 His heart was far too near his tongue !

That honest tongue ! That honest heart,
 That loathed a falsehood—even in jest !
 If farther they had kept apart,
 He might have walked in calmer rest—
 Such slavish rest as pliant knaves
 Too oft may grasp and make their own,
 From where, amongst our nameless graves,
 Some bleeding saviour had been thrown.
 He walked the world—his greatest crime :
 He worshipped Right before the time !

A child of toil, he kept his post,
 And wrote his deeds in Wintry sand ;
 For Andrew's first and proudest boast
 Was KNIGHTSHIP of the HORNY HAND !
 But from the present, not the past,
 He sought the Legend for his shield :
 A pillar brightening in the blast—
 A toiler on a sable field,
 With “ Work and wait, and dare be true ! ”
 Brave heart—were meet for men like you !

No bland betrayer of his caste—
No subtle fawner on the crowd—
He bore erect the Wintry blast,
Nor to the golden Summer bowed.
A shining Truth, 'twixt class and class,
He spurned the heartless herd that bends,
With flowers, to every Scourge may pass,
But keeps the thorns to crown its friends ;
He stood, the generous creed upon,
That right to all is wrong to none !

He left the wars of sect with sect
To loveless hearts—to straiten'd minds !
His Freedom—shewn by word and act—
Was world-embracing as the winds ;
His Christian views were heaven broad :
He would not dare, whoe'er might blame,
To fix the mercy of his God
Within the circle of a name ;
But, held that Woe had half its fires
From saintly envies—human ires !

And I beside his chair have stood,
Or sat me on his brawny knee,
The while he fired my childish blood,
O'er human wrongs—ay, rights—to be :
For still he hoped that, through the haze,
Some smould'ring spark, in time, would spread,
Till every dream of bolder days,
By freedom's watch-fires, would be read—
And Peoples feel, through all their veins,
The luxury of breaking chains.

Ah, well ! He lived, and hoped, and dreamed,
But whether right or wrong, to-day,
Or whether his ills were all they seemed,
We scarce need question o'er his clay ;
For Rights and Wrongs their tintings take
From what, not why or how, we do :
'Tis Time and Circumstance that make
Our Facts or Fancies false or true !

And high and holy, now, appears
What dug the graves of other years !

And thus the wheels of Change and Chance
Go circling round us day by day ;
Alas ! that note of mind's advance
Should e're be caught from hearts' decay ;
But so it is, our lights refuse
To be with sager shadows cross'd,
Till o'er some loved one's tomb we muse
On what we've gained—on what we've lost ;
But still, through every age and clime,
Such tombs are finger-posts of time !

Oh ! standing by them, feel we not
Our souls go back, through time and space,
And clasp, o'er many a kindred spot,
Some Cottage-Noble of our race !
Who strove with once-existing ills,
And smote the night that cloaked them there,
With glory from an hundred hills,
Where yet the sea-calves made their lair !—
Such glory as the Seers see,
Like noon-light, on the far to BE !

Oh, master minds ! Oh, kingly breasts !
If still our Earth your like may yield,
May it grant them when they seek their rests,
A broader love, their worth to shield—
Oh that the light of holier deeds
May ever shine through every cloud,
Till every eye, the darkest, reads,
What raised the man above the crowd !
God grant us strength to hold the true,
In days so pregnant with the new !

Or where the old have less of right,
However rightful in its day,
Oh, grant us strength, Thou, Lord of Light
To cast its grosser parts away !

And hold the broader beam of things—
The fitter fact for present state—
If, from its use, no shadow springs
To cloud our entrance at thy gate.
Oh, grant us light—the light of mind—
For we are pilgrims, lame and blind !

Then lift the turf—the clay—the sand,
And lay him in his mother mould ;
Ay, lay him down with gentle hand—
His own was gentle as 'twas bold !
Then go ye on your busier way,
Or, if there 's moisture in your eye.
Sit down, and shed it o'er his clay !
For me—my brain is scorched and dry !
If I had tears for aught below,
'Tis o'er *his* dust to-day they'd flow

FAITH.

THE name of Faith 's a holy word,
Though men at times abuse it,
And Faith itself 's a conquering sword,
When earnestly we use it :
Believe yourself a paltry slave,
And Freedom falls behind you ;
Believe yourself a man, and brave—
And such the world shall find you ;
For Faith 's a nerve and stay of steel
To lofty and to lowly—
A heavenly lamp for human weal,
Where human will is holy !

'Tis Faith that veils the darts of Death,
Or arms us for his tourney ;
'Tis Faith that points the Patriot's path,
And feasts him on his journey :

Believe you're bored with cobweb soul,
 And every breath will break it ;
 Believe you've might to make the goal,
 And, here 's my hand, you'll make it !
 For Faith, a mover is of mounds—
 A raiser of the lowly,
 A trump of soul-begetting sounds,
 When ear and heart are holy.

Then take ye Faith, nor ever fear
 Ye err by such assumption,
 No matter how the taunt and jeer
 May name the nymph Presumption !
 And grasp her firm when evils lower—
 The closer clasped the warmer—
 For Faith in your right arm is more
 Than fifty suits of armour !
 Oh ! Faith 's a shield to mighty men,
 A love-light to the lowly,
 And if a smiter now-and-then,
 The work at times is holy !

Then, God of nations ! sow each soil,
 Each city, hill, and hollow,
 With Faith—with more, the Will to toil,
 And all man seeks must follow :
 For had each soul but Faith and Will,
 Despite of scath or scorning,
 The tallest mount of human ill
 The sea might have ere morning !
 Oh ! Faith, thou might in muscle's dearth,
 No power of man may flout thee !—
 God bless thee, light of heaven and earth,
 For both were dim without thee !



C H A R I T Y .

BROWN Summer 's abroad, and is, shepherd-like, keeping
Her brightness and odour by mountain and vale,
Where sainted young Melody, heavenward leaping,
Rolls, gushing and gushing, her heart on the gale !
The hills of our Ulster—the queenly—the olden—
True passioned-souled dreamers of beauty, of God—
Gleam forth with their flower-thoughts, em'rald and golden,
Like spots where some light-leaving angel had trod.

Then lovingly mingle these flowers, my brother—
The gold of the lily and green of our land—
For, oh ! while they aid us in hating each other,
Far better our Isle were a desert of sand !

Ah ! say not you feel that the God of creation
Had love in His heart, when He lighted this world
With beauties like these, if the soul of a nation
Must groan at each glimpse of their glory unfurled ;
Nor say you believe that the Child of the Manger,
In coming, in going, in aught, was Divine,
If the creed which you hold the best beacon in danger,
Must lead you to look with offence upon mine :
If Heaven be love—if religion be holy—
If God be a being whom man should obey—
Ah ! hate not, but pity, your brother, if folly,
Or creed and conviction have led him astray.

These lessons of love, from the Holy One's finger,
Where foliage or flower its grandeur reveals,
Behold ! through their silence, as o'er them we linger,
A voice to our reason and justice appeals :
To feuds of the flowers while, daily and duly,
Ye trace the dark story of fetters and yokes,
'Twere meet to remember that blame may, as truly,
Be his who resenteth as his who provokes :
If foolish, or worse, be the deed that doth fashion
These glories to emblems of conquest or rule,
What better were shedding, oh ! brother of passion,
For such, what may be but the blood of a fool ?

Oh ! if, in our darkness, we have wantonly lingered,
 To pile up the altar where Brotherhood bleeds,
 Why—why to our folly cling on, gory-fingered,
 Till crushed through the earth by our colours and creeds ?
 Let 's hang the red past, like a beacon, before us,
 Not lighting up passions by Heaven abhor'd,
 But gilding those clouds, by our madness hung o'er us,
 The *scoff* of the nations—the *ban* of the Lord !
 Ah, Heaven ! no more may those passions have power
 To wring from thy teachings the scourge and the chain ;
 No more, o'er the tint of a leaf or a flower,
 May Folly so flourish the club of a Cain !



PROGRESS.

MEN and brothers—men and slaves—
 Slaves to many a withering folly !—
 Wherefore wage we, fools and knaves,
 O'er our fathers' mingling graves—
 O'er the soil their bones make holy—
 Wage with such a maniac zest,
 Still the war of shires and races ?—
 South, and North, and East, and West—
 Sit we while that bloody jest
 Stains our Eden's sunniest places ?
 Sit we sheathed in moral rust,—
 Hope, herself—while fools deride her—
 Side by side with bleeding Trust ?—
 Ah ! when Hope 's laid in the dust,
 Self-respect is soon beside her !

Men and brothers—men and slaves !
 Where they seek to save a nation,
 Howsoe'er the tempest raves,
 Every brow its roughest braves—
 Overboard go creed and station ;
 Every hand has marked its toil—
 Every heart has this within it—

Bone may break, and blood may boil—
On the die's my native soil—

And here's the cast about to win it!

Path of Progress, closed or clear,

Oh! for men to wrestle through it—

Feud or folly—mound or mere—

Every lip hurrahing—Here!

Here's the man who's fit to do it!

Men and brothers, where they've mind

To lift a hand so low as this is,

Do they waste their precious wind,

Jarring—warring with their kind,

Mewing over "hits" or "misses?"

"On" 's the word, and on they sweep,

Doubting dastards, be there any,

Left to watch red Faction weep—

Left in soul-corroding sleep,

Dreaming o'er the "maddened" many!

Pathway closed or pathway clear—

Oh! their *maddened* ones are through it,

Flood or flame, whate'er appear,

Every tongue hurrahing—Here!

Here's the man has might to do it!

Men and brothers, would ye try

To shed the light of love about ye'—

Up each voice with—Here am I—

Stand or fall, or live or die!

Oh! what were all the rest without me?

Gloom or glory!—you! or you!

Here's my heart—ye hills that feed me—

Every man, the island through—

Weak one—strong one—up and do,

Or down till toil no longer need ye!

Path of Progress, closed or clear,

Oh! for men to thunder through it,

Shouting—Here, my brethren—here,

Leaps the soul, a foe to fear—

Leaps the limb, alone, could do it!

Men and brothers, where the breast
 Heaves one pulse for native glory,
 Love for all 's its inmost guest—
 What 's the East, or what 's the West—
 North or South, or Whig or Tory ?
 Feeling rings through every tone :
 I live here, if you live yonder,
 But each inch of soil 's my own—
 Farther off the fairer grown—
 Farther off my soul the fonder !
 Pathway closed, or pathway clear,
 There were men would soon be through it,
 Shaking Error's thrones with fear,
 Reckless sword, or shot, or spear—
 There 's the work, and how to do it !

QUEEN OF THE LAGAN.

OH ! her feet went like flashes of light
 Where the green crackled, snow-fringed and hoary,
 And her curls, like your streamers at night,
 Were dancing abroad in their glory :
 But her glance, as she passed, was so proud,
 When I turned out my heart I read in it—
 “ Slip away for the cloth of your shroud,
 'Twill be needed you know not the minute.”

Now, you'd look upon maidens as fair,
 By the Lagan, in sixes and sevens,
 And, mark me, you'd meet with them there,
 The fairest beneath the blue heavens :
 But the eyes of that fairy-one shone,
 Twin spirits such magic displaying,
 And coloured, a shade like my own,
 But—I fear—something quicker at slaying.

Then I looked on the beautiful sky,
 And I looked where the Lagan lay frozen,
 But the first for my bound was too high,
 And the last rather *cold* to be chosen !

When young Hope tipped the cheek of despair
With a smile, saying—" Stay, has he tried her ?
I've a notion you'll crow to the air
If he get but ten minutes beside her !"

Oh ! the world for young Hope and her smile,
And her foresight in love and in glory,
Sure I had not slipped back half a mile,
Till I picked up the truth of her story—
Did I say there were maidens as fair ?
Well, the Lagan has gems—no denying,
But that morning, dear Lag', you're aware,
'Twas the queen of you parted me sighing.

THE ROUND TWELVEMONTH.

OLD Winter, in closets of ice,
Every stream in our valleys had laid,
And each twig, by his frosty advice,
Was adorned with a silver cockade :
And 'tis just the round twelvemonth to-day,
Since along by the Lagan I flew,
When I met with—but why should I say,
Till ye see what a fortnight will do ?

Still it is not, dear sister, to you,
That your Jenny should open the past,
To fling out but a flower or two,
And be storing the gems to the last.
Then I'll tell, though you should disapprove ;
But our mother, you've noticed her gloom,
Would you believe it, she thinks I'm in love !
And you couldn't imagine with whom ?

Then whisper, dear sister ; but why
Do you smile on your poor Jenny so ?
One would think, through the light of your eye,
Sparkled all that your sister could show.

Be it so then—you cannot condemn,
For I fancy you've guessed at the whole,
And my Jamie's last word was a gem,
That I've fixed on the joy of my soul !

And it is not, thank heaven, for wealth
We have chosen—come blessing, come ban—
But his cheek has the spring-flood of health,
And his brow has the stamp of a man.
And I'd rather be tramped in the mould,
Than stuck up by the side of a king,
If but loved (as an image of gold)
For the weight of the wealth I might bring !

— • —
P E G G Y .

THIS spot on Colin brow, I believe,
My Peggy still should know,
For well I mind one summer-eve,
Some thirty years ago,
The living, crimson, starry specks,
From off those heathery curls,
I strung around your neck of necks—
My all, my world of worlds !

And though the rosy light of love
Was fluttering o'er your cheek,
And though I tried your heart to move,
'Twas but your eyes could speak.
But brightly through their dewy blue,
The trembling sparkles stole,
Which wing those thoughts that wander through
The sunlight of the soul.

What phantom of your parent's rage
My track of light could tread,
When o'er your blue eye's glistening page
Your truthful heart I read ?

How could I in the future dip,
To look for clouds or sun ?
My earthly all was Peggy's lip,
I kissed, and that was won !



M Y W I L L I E .

Oh ! my Willie's eye is bright,
As the glowing glance of June,
And his bosom is as white
As the border round the moon :
But the red of Willie's cheek
You must look upon to know,
For were I to think a week,
'Tis like nothing else below !

And to see his forehead bare,
When his daily work is done,
And each starry spot there's there—
Yellow kisses of the sun—
Shining through each glossy ring,
Of so beautiful a brown ;
Then you could not *do* the thing
That would make him own a frown !

Is it angry I could feel,
When he's nipping down my thread,
And I sitting at my wheel—
Little spinning in my head ?
No ! you couldn't think it wrong,
If you saw the way he smiles,
And to hear him sing a song,
Why, you'd travel twenty miles !

Though my mother turns to frown
When he "hasps" the osier gate,
And my sisters run him down,
Still I think it isn't hate ;

For our *Riggle's* nearly dry,
 And we neither churn nor skim,
 Yet, I know not how or why,
 There is still a drop for him !

But to see my father stand—
 Heaven bless him more and more—
 Shaking blushing Willie's hand,
 As they're parting at the door !
 Oh ! he loves my Willie well,
 And I own, I love him too,
 But how warmly, I would tell
 Unto very, very few !



THE LAND OF LOVE.

'Tis a purer spot than this
 You'd be after seeking, Nanny ?
 Well, keep off the world of bliss,
 I am not aware of any !
 And, I fancy, I could prove,
 (Though you frown on all that's in it),
 'Tis your fabled land of love,
 You are sitting in this minute.

For the land of love, my dear,
 Is where *Reason* skulks a minor ;
 Neck and ringlets such as here,
 Set them up with having finer !
 Hearts and hands together grown,
 Lips and eyes, too, ripe and sunny,
 Who would call that love alone ?
 'Tis the land of light and honey !

Now the way that *Time* should fly,
 O'er a clime so fair as this is,
Time may show you by and by,
 In a thunder-storm of kisses.

But, for me, I think we should
Never let a moment o'er us
Without writing—"it is good"
On whatever lies before us.

Now the miser marks his time,
With the yellow trash he gathers,
We, I fancy, more sublime,
Should have pens of purer feathers,
And by aid of inky eyes,
We might mark, without a blunder,
Every moment as it flies,
On the rosy tablets under !

A SONG OF SADNESS.

CRAWL on, ye worthless reptile race,
Crawl on in tearless degradation ;
For even tears, in things so base,
Would ask an age of explanation.
The slave who weeps, his wound must feel,
And one day stay the hand that spreads it,
For clay itself will clog the heel
Of him who over-deeply treads it.
But ye have felt, ye faithless scum,
To only ban the lips would breathe it,
And kiss, through many an age to come,
The heel that grinds your neck beneath it.

And yours was once a way to fame,
When, rent with hope and expectations,
The *world*, on tiptoe, sought your name
Appearing on the map of nations.
Ye pencilled there a line of light,
That seemed of every grossness shaven—
The world looked up if all were right,
The light was gone—the word was—"Craven."

Oh ! where's the soul it would not shame
 To own the hapless land that owns ye ?
 Ye fooled—ye fled from blame to blame,
 Till Freedom's god in tears bemoans ye !

Ye raised a spirit in your might,
 That walked the Isle in earthless glory,
 And hurled a light from height to height,
 Through many a darksome hour before ye.
 It grew—it rose—till flesh and blood,
 Your sternest, fiercest, foeman felt it,
 But when sublimely great it stood,
 Ye fluttered round it till it melted.

Oh ! where's the soul it would not shame
 To own the land for ever reft you ?
 Ye wrangled round the gates of fame
 Till Freedom's bleeding god has left you !

MURDOCH.

Air—"The Coolun."

AND is it the arm of my Murdoch must lie,
 Like a storm-splintered bough, and the spoiler so nigh ;
 Wirrastrue, that the broadest and best-cleaving steel
 Should be missing, this day, from the ranks of O'Neill !

Oh ! your own was the soul would have leaped to your eye,
 To get chasing your blade through the heart of Mountjoy ;
 But the tyrant may triumph o'er mountain and bay,
 For the light of Mayola, Loughbeg shrouds to day.

And 'twas I, worn and white with the mildews of time,
 Sat and watched in that eye for the star of its prime ;
 But you died ; no, they murdered you ! ah, we know how,
 And my heart and my home are the lonely ones now !

That the father's forgiveness may walk by their side,
 Till their souls grow as white as that cheek of my pride ;
 Wirra, how could they look on the beauty you bore,
 With the glance of a murderer, Murdoch asthore ?

Sure the locks of my boy were as fair to look on
As the broad yellow cloud round the brow of the sun ;
But the heart-wave that once heaved in flame o'er his brow
Is but clotting and crisping the curls o'er it now.

Oh, and *yours* was the *brow* that rose tall in the vale,
When the laugh of your soul pierced the wing of the gale,
As your foot, without stripping one leaf of its dew,
Swam away through the dance as a sunbeam might do !

To light love o'er our land through your innocent blood,
Could my tears become stars, I might weep, and I would ;
I might weep, and I would, could my tears become dew,
To but nourish *one* daisy, acushla, o'er you !

But the priest shall be robed, and the Mass shall be said,
And the saints, with their glories, shall bind up your head,
And your own Inisteda its wild bloom shall wave,
Where the girls of Mayola pray over your grave.

T H E F E L O N .

OH ! he kissed her white lips and he bade her not weep,
Though his own were in sorrow-snow frozen,
For his sternness of soul lay that moment asleep,
As he hung o'er the brow of his chosen !

And he crushed her in agony into his heart,
With a clasp that nought human might sever ;
For he felt, as he sobbed o'er his soul's softer part,
He was lost to her bosom for ever !

'Twas a moment soon past, for the patriot's pride
O'er the felon's tall forehead is weaving
To wreathlets of flame the young bosom's blood tide
He'd have shed for the land he is leaving.

And the stars of his eloquence burningly shine
O'er the grief-dew they've wrung from his spirit,
In his scorn of the band which around him they twine,
And the powers that force him to wear it !

Blame him not, blame him not for the flame in his veins,
He has done what his destiny bade him ;
And he's gone through his kinghood of soul, in the chains
That his labour for cravens has made him !

A CHANT OF "THE EIGHTY-TWO CLUB."

'TWAS a nation that met in the hearts of a few,
'Twas the spirit that quickened the year eighty-two ;
The spirit, yea, spirits ! not phantoms of air,
But heroes and martyrs substantially there,
Were feasting their souls on the new-risen light,
And rising as bulwarks of union and might ;
And whispering to glory, on earth or above,
The passwords, the pathways, are concord and love.
The banquet, the banquet, the year forty-five !
Go, dastards, and tremble ! go, tyrants, contrive !
Our Island has wakened to freedom again ;
'Twas only in slumber she thought of a chain !

They met ! yes, they met as their fathers had done ;
And they rose ! yes, they rose with their battle half won ;
And they spoke ! oh they spoke, and their words as they roll

Form a shield for each heart and a stay for each soul :
For they flung o'er the future the light of the past,
Till the gloom of the present in brilliance is lost ;
And our oldest and coldest, from centre to shore,
Feel something within them they felt not before ;
And our young and our strong, with their backs to the past,

Embrace in the ardour of concord at last ;
And they murmur, all eager to bound through the blast—
Ah, the spring-gales of freedom are coming too fast !

And the Club shall assemble, though tyrants should stride
On our Isle with the minions of death by their side ;

Or the dark dashing torrents our mountains contain,
Should leap in a livery of crimson again ;
We've chiefs and we've leaders, we've might and we've
more
Than in war or in peace we could number before ;
And we've spirits as bold as the Dane ever braved,
When his conquerer rose from the soil he enslaved ;
And the soul of a nation upraised in her ire,
Danced over his hosts in a column of fire.
We've maidens and minstrels to cheer us along
By the light of their eyes and the might of their song !

MY SOUTHERN BROTHER.

Oh, would thou were near
 Me, my Southern brother ;
I love thee as dear
 As the child of my mother :
I am languid and lone
 Since the night you departed ;
My lips have the tone
 Of a maid broken-hearted.
And though they have strove
 To keep us asunder,
Believe me, I love
 Thee, my Phadruig, the fonder.

Then come, love, and lead to the green mountain heather,
We'll sing our wild anthems of freedom together.

The stranger came here
 In thine absence to woo me ;
I looked with a tear
 On the hand he held to me :
For oh, such a hand !
 Love, as truth thou reverest,
'Twas reeking and stained
 With the death of our dearest !

I turned from his blood
And his poisonous embraces,
But turn where I would
There were pale weeping faces :
For fancy her mantle of light had thrown o'er me,
And memory arrayed all her horrors before me.

I looked on the flames
Over valley and mountain,
I looked on the streams
Rushing red from life's fountain ;
I looked on Despair
Laughing wild at his doings,
Or flinging her hair
And her ban o'er the ruins ;
I looked to the earth
On a cold bleeding father,
I looked on the hearth
On a maniac mother,
Whose weeping, whose praying, whose *blood* could not
move him ;
Ah, how does he *think* that their daughter could love him ?

He said thou wert false,
And the true should disdain thee ;
And everything else
Wherewithal he might stain thee ;
He told me thy breath
Was itself a contagion,
And darkness and death
Lay beneath thy religion :
And should I e'er join
With thyself or thy brothers,
Ye'd sacrifice mine
At the shrine of your fathers.
But, love, thou hast spoken, and oh, I believe thee ;
And so shall I, love—thou would blush to deceive me !

Then haste thee ! my choice,
To thy sister's communion ;
Let millions rejoice
In the hope of our union ;
That altar of thine
Shall be sacred unto thee ;
And these, love, of mine,
Shall no longer undo thee.
We'll give faith her own,
Over mountain and valley ;
The heart is her throne,
And its thought shall be holy.

And though each may fancy his pathway the nighest,
We all, love, may meet at the Throne of the Highest !

Then give me thy hand,
Oh, my Southern brother ;
Now say by that brand
That's so bright in thine other,
That mountains of slain
Shall arise up beside us,
E'er ever again
Shall a despot divide us !
'Tis done—and the North
Here her motto hath chosen,
The shamrock henceforth,
And the soil that it grows on !

Now, love, we'll away to the green mountain heather,
And sing our wild anthems of freedom together.



THE LOVELY FORSAKEN.

OH, she kneels by the green-rolling waves of the west,
Where the white foam around her is playing,
But her eyes on the blue-bosomed heavens are cast,
For to Heaven's own King she is praying ;
And low by her side
(Once her glory and pride)

Lies the harp that no fingers awaken ;
 And hers were the songs
 Full of anguish and wrongs,
 For her name was the Lovely Forsaken !

But she leaps like the bolt o'er the blue waters hurled,
 And again is her tall harp before her ;
 Her hair like a sunburst around her unfurled,
 For a halo of glory is o'er her !
 And sweetly she sings
 To the answering strings,
 Till the echoing hills that surround her
 Dash forward their slaves,
 Like the rushing of waves,
 In their thousands on thousands around her !

And there, whilst in myriads around her they move,
 Every heart to high heaven has plighted
 Its vow, that no more shall the lips which they love
 Sing the soul-slaying song of the slighted.
 Then, alas ! for the heart
 That would shrink or depart
 From the vow it so nobly has taken ;
 And, alas ! for the hand,
 That, with freedom's own brand,
 Would again write our Isle "The Forsaken!"

Then, forward ! again wake the echoes anew,
 Till all earth drinks the thunder-toned story,
 As it sweeps from Kinsale to where giant Sliev-dhu
 Lifts its head in its heathery glory ;
 East and west, south and north,
 Send your proud millions forth
 Till the broad wings of Freedom wave o'er them ;
 Though the flash of her sword,
 Like the glance of the Lord,
 Should again light the valleys before them !



OUR OWN LAND.

Is this a time to cut and carve
Each other's souls for trifles,
When at our hearts the foe's reserve
Prepare to point their rifles ;
Up ! up ! ye true—
Prepare to do !
But hear it, high and low, man :
Stain Erin's faith
With angry breath,
And Erin writes you foeman !
Our own land, our dear land,
The green land that bore us,
Let's firmer grasp her bleeding hand,
And faction sweep before us !

Her page of every bloody trace,
Before ye'd dream to close it,
To cleanse ye vowed in heaven's face,
And mark ye, heaven knows it ;
And sure this day
Her green's as gay,
As when your vows were plighted ;
And now as then,
Ye know it, men,
She's full as banned and blighted.
Our own land, our green land,
The dear land that bore us ;
Oh, who would drop her bleeding hand,
And aught of hope before us !

Oh, no ! we've none, be Heaven praised,
To bite his lip and falter,
Till freedom's sacrifice has blazed
On every cottage altar ;
And here once more,
As vowed before,
Though all on earth oppose it,

However won,
 It must be done,
 And that's the way to close it ;
 Our own land, our dear land,
 The green land that bore us ;
 We'll firmer grasp her bleeding hand,
 And sweep her foes before us.

MY MOUNTAIN MAID.

Oh, mine's the maid of laughing lip,
 Of feather foot and flashing eye ;
 And more to me's her finger tip,
 Than all that walk beneath the sky ;
 So fond, so warm,
 So fair of form,
 My matchless maid, my mountain queen,
 'Twere worth a throne—
 Thy shackles gone—
 To see thee dance in gold and green ;
 My maiden true, my maiden young,
 So proud of soul, so free of guile ;
 I would not give that dimpled cheek
 For all the wrinkles in our Isle.
 Yet 'twas not, love, the glistening white
 That skirts thy cheek of richest hue ;
 Nor yet thy smile's electric might,
 That told my heart what love could do ;
 But 'twas the soul
 For Erin's dole,
 Quick quivering in thine eye of pride,
 That flung a chain
 Round every vein,
 And led my spirit like a bride !
 My maiden true, my maiden young,
 So proud of soul, and free of guile ;
 I would not give that dimpled cheek
 For wrinkled wisdom's sagest smile !

And some may say thy warmth I'll blame,
When time has turned youth's pages o'er !

And sober reason guides the flame
That passon whirled awhile before :

Away, away,
To these I say,

Though young, my mountain maiden's sage,
And while I quaff
Her gushing laugh,

Drink ye the watery smiles of age.

My maiden young, my maiden true,
So proud of soul, so free of guile ;
I would not give that dimpled cheek
For all the wrinkles in our Isle.

Their smiles, their frowns may wander on,
No higher, prouder lot for me,
Than toe the turf, my witching one,
To some old Irish tune with thee.

Oh what were wealth,
Or hope or health,
Or all the world before me laid,
If 'reft of thee,
Asthore machree !

My young, my Irish mountain maid !
So fond, so warm, so fair of form
So proud of soul, so free of guile ;
I would not give that dimpled cheek,
For wrinkled wisdom's sagest smile !



WILD HARP OF IERNE.

WILD Harp of Ierne, though rude was thy tone
By my fingers awaked, it was motherland's own ;
And, oh ! 'tis high Heaven alone can define,
How my spirit was woven, dear wild one, with thine :
And yet we are severed, if nothing remains
Of the past to inspire thee but weeping and chains ;

Oh, tell me its fiery-souled daring is o'er,
And I'll wake thee to visions of glory no more !

Wild Harp of Ierne, the pride of the proud,
When the true could be sung in their glory or shroud,
Shall I ban thee, and rend thee, and fling thee away,
Like a half-shattered blade on a half-ended day ?
Must thy lisplings be changed like the changings of men,
Or be doomed—ay, be crushed into silence again ?
On, on with the strain, and our toiling is o'er,
For I'll wake thee to visions of glory no more !

Wild Harp of Ierne, there's darkness abroad,
And we've tampered and trifled with tyranny's rod,
Till Reason herself, like a guilty thing, sleeps,
While Liberty hangs o'er the culprit, and weeps :
And the holiest thoughts ever born of the heart
Have been changed into poison, and twisted by art ;
Till the slave clasps the fetters half riven before,
And resigns him to dream of their breaking no more.

Wild Harp of Ierne, thou once had a strain
Could have quickened the soul that dissensions have
slain,
When the *lion of minstrelsy* led us along
On the track of the foe by the light of his song :
Oh, he came with a bosom nor callous nor cold,
And he left us untainted by power or gold ;
And his name like a halo thy spirit hangs o'er,
Though we wake thee to visions of glory no more !

Wild Harp of Ierne, they've melted the spell
That has fettered the child of the stranger so well ;
For, when virtue itself is no shield for the breast,
Can we tell where the next poisoned arrow may rest :
Shall we till, shall we toil, till our spirits are worn
Through a seed-time of tears for an autumn of scorn,
Oh, the heart whispers no ! but a warmth in its core
Would allure us to visions of glory once more.

THE PHANTOM SWORD.

THERE is whiteness on thy cheek, dear Isle,
In thy soul there is black despair ;
For the grief that thy lips would speak, dear Isle,
They have wrapped like a dark flame there :
And they've bound each nerve of thy burning tongue
In a most unholy spell,
And they say, though in twain thy heart were wrung,
It were "vanity," shouldst thou tell,
In castle or cot,
Ah, name it not !
For it sounds like our Isle's death knell.

They have called into dreamy life, dear Isle,
From the depths of a fancied time,
E'en the shade of a spectre-strife, dear Isle,
And they've named the *nothing* "crime!"
And oh ! they were more than magic hands
That had bound our souls as one,
But they've used their creature's ghostly bands,
Till the fastenings are undone ;
Ay, they've cut each cord
With a phantom sword,
In the broad light of the sun !

And the green and the blue as one, dear Isle,
They were weaving around thy brow ;
But each finger has caught at its own, dear Isle,
And "divide" is the watchword now !
For 'tis said that a mighty woe-charged cloud
On the heavens of freedom lowers,
That would burst with a death on the burning crowd,
When they'd pant for its healing showers.
 in castle and cot,
 What a lot, what a lot,
To-day in this Isle is ours !

Can I sing thee a song of joy, dear Isle,
 When I look on the dismal shade
 That hath come o'er as bright a sky, dear Isle,
 As e'er curtained a captive's head ?
 And yet there is something tips my soul,
 Like the wing of Speranza's* song ;
 And it points the path while it shows the goal,
 And it soothes till my hopes grow strong :
 For it says, there's a might
 In the nerve of right,
 That the heavens deny to wrong !

And thy harp to my heart again, dear Isle,
 I will take at the minstrel's words ;
 And I'll wring from it many a strain, dear Isle,
 For my life blood's in its chords :
 And I hear in my soul, from the embryo stave,
 What in other days shall be,
 Not the shout of a tyrant or a slave,
 But the song of a people free !
 And it rings on my ear,
 Loud, stern, and clear,
 As the laugh of a wintry sea !

Then what though thy bridal dress, dear Isle,
 May be dipped in a midnight stain,
 Thou art loved by the true no less, dear Isle,
 And the false hand breaks no chain !
 And thy darksome dress shall be changed ere long,
 To a robe of the fairest dye ;
 For the souls are ripe, and the hands are strong,
 That shall brush every blackness by :
 When a spectre-horde,
 Or a phantom sword,
 May not sever their holy tie !

* "Speranza," one of the *Nation's* contributors, who wrote a poetical reply to "The Wild Harp of Ierne."

THE VOICE OF THE NATION.

IRELAND's bands, and ye who lead 'em,
If indeed ye pant for freedom,
Is it by your fevered factions,
Heartless cant, and palsied actions ?
Is it, men, by these, or lying
At a tyrant's footstool sighing,
Ye can bring your Isle a token
Showing that her bonds are broken ?
Never be it thought or spoken !
Countless years of hackneyed clamour,
Could not shake one cold link from her.

Is it by your columns shattered,
Goaded, slighted, banned, and scattered ?
Is it proving you've repented,
When the tree of hope ye planted
Waves abroad its flashing blossoms
O'er the desert of our bosoms ?
Is it thus a yoke ye'd sever
Under heaven—never, never !
Well we know, alas ! wherever
Fetters clank and bayonets bristle,
Freedom comes not for a whistle !

Stern's the task—as sternly view it !
Give the word, let that be, " Through it !"’
Friends and foemen, while ye linger,
Taunt and jeer the wav'ring finger :
Fearless tone and tightened sinew,
They alone your rights can win you.
Know ye not what Reason teaches,
Freedom weeps when Might beseeches ;
But, alas ! where flattery preaches,
And disunion holds dominion,
Freedom ne'er can wave a pinion.

Up, and join your severed sections !
Change your wordy wind to actions ;

Shew the world that fetters riven,
 Border on your zeal for heaven :
 Prove it by at once combining
 Hands and hearts, and spirits joining !
 Oh, shall discord ever blind you ?
 Fling that foreign ban behind you,
 And no chain on earth can bind you ;
 Nor could aught, save heavenly power,
 Forge one link would last an hour.

Oh, to see, of every station,
 Men at work to build a nation ;
 Toiling on, with souls delighted,
 To the tune “ Again united : ”
 Night and day our spirits feeding,
 Soothing, urging, calming, leading,
 On your souls, as brothers rally !
 Who would let a feud or folly
 Mar him in a march so holy ?
 Earnest hands would labour, labour,
 Or by light of soul or sabre !

But if fate have else decreed it,
 Ye who have in heart seceded,
 Set your souls for every weather ;
 Task, and toil, and pull together !
 Be your weapons song and science,
 Be in truth your whole reliance ;
 Then, however malice brand you,
 Virtue every aid will lend you,
 And the God of truth defend you !
 Ye to Erin’s struggles wedded,
 There’s your path, and how to tread it !

BRIGHTER HOPES.

AND shall we hang our heads and say,
 Our hopes these bonds to sever
 Were only dreams to live a day,
 And then be gone for ever ?

Oh no ! while darker drops the blight,
 With riper zeal we'll view it ;
 Nor ever halt to talk of right
 Till once we're nobly through it :
 And when a barrier blocks our path,
 Whoe'er may fall before it,
 By truth, we'll try to move it by,
 Or hand in hand leap o'er it !

Too glorious has our struggle been
 To sink so soon benighted ;
 'Twas not a shout for orange or green,
 But one and all united :
 And creed and caste were flung behind,
 A nation's corps to enter,
 Till all the magic of her mind
 Rose one o'erwhelming centre :
 And shall we at their barriers stop
 To whine like slaves before them ?
 Oh no ! we'll try to shift them by,
 Or leap together o'er them.

The richest ray that ever shone
 May meet a shade to cross it ;
 The deepest gulf that e'er was known
 May have a way to pass it :
 But oh ! ye can't disperse the shade
 By gathering darkness to it ;
 Nor can ye pass the gulf that's made,
 By widening as ye view it.
 They're false who pause at barriers now,
 They're slaves who kneel before them ;
 For true men try to fling them by ;
 Or fling their phalanx o'er them.

Then rid your hearts of these delays,
 And, cheerily, round your standard
 Give three hurrahs for fairer days,
 Then onward ! steadily onward !

And think each hour ye throw away
 To make dissensions stronger,
 Extends the path ye tread to-day
 A twelvemonth's journey longer.
 Then pass the barrier—brothers, pass !
 A nation's lips implore it—
 Her loudest cheer, her warmest prayer,
 For him who's foremost o'er it !



THOUGHTS FOR THE PRESENT.

REMEMBER the proud year forty-three,
 Ye men of the steel-toned era,
 Whose full hearts heaved, like a bill-hemmed sea,
 Round Mullaghmast and Tara ;
 When the fiery foam of outgushing words,
 From leaders stern and gifted,
 Broke over your ears like the clash of swords,
 By conquering bands uplifted !

Men ! these are the days of doubt and guile,
 Of falsehood, fraud and folly :
 Then ask your hearts have ye yet an Isle
 For which to bleed were holy ?
 Oh, yes ! ye've the same green laughing land,
 And the same hearts to adore her ;
 But, men ! there's the same cold foreign hand,
 Like a black blight hanging o'er her.

And your hearts have leaped in the living light
 Of the creed that proud year brought you ;
 And now, in the teeth of ban and blight,
 Will ye stand by the truths it taught you ?
 Can ye bear with the frowns of a wayward fate,
 And your glorious work renew, men ?
 Can ye smile at the false world's craven hate ?
 Oh, ye can if ye be but true men.

And a bold-tongued spirit that brooks not fraud,
O'er our wave-walked shores doth hover ;
But the word and the will of an upright God
Shall wing it the island over :
And the heart that strangles the honest thought
That its innate whisperer teaches,
Shall shrivel and shrink into soulless nought,
Wherever that spirit preaches !

Then up over mountain, rath and moor,
From Wexford to Slievegallen,
Ye men of the hearts that have grown too pure
For a thing that is dark to dwell in !
True men of east, west, south and north,
(False ones, we well can spare ye,)
Up, up ! and the thoughts that your souls bring forth,
In heaven's blue face declare ye !

Then on in the zeal that looks not back !
And the hope that truth inspires
Shall light ye a lamp, if the sky grows black,
At the flash of your free hills' fires :
And if round ye the gusts of dissensions rise,
Speak ye to their boltless thunder :
While one holy shred of the green flag flies,
True men shall be ranged close under !

A SONG FOR TRUE MEN.

AGAIN, again the tempest tones
Of Ireland's true defenders,
Arise, and ring above the groans
And taunts of cold pretenders :
And prouder yet the ranks they'd smash,
Shall wing young Erin's thunder,
Till heaven itself shall feel the crash
That cleaves our bonds asunder.

For here's no heart
 Hath lot or part
 With Christian creed's reviler ;
 Nor here's the lip
 Hath yearned to sip
 The flesh-pots of the spoiler.

'Twas not to gain the world's applause, :
 Nor yet our country's favour,
 We plunged our spirits in her cause,
 And made it ours for ever :
 'Twas not to raise her struggling soul,
 Till hope itself grew torture,
 And then to basely sink the whole
 In some unholy barter.

Oh, here's no heart
 Hath lot or part
 With Erin's faith's reviler ;
 Nor here's the lip
 Hath yearned to sip
 The flesh-pots of the spoiler.

We rose to see this Island freed—
 For this, our hearts adore it ;
 We rose to blend our every creed
 In sacred union o'er it :
 We rose to shatter foreign thrall—
 What knave would dare deny it !
 And once again, or stand or fall,
 In Freedom's name we'll try it.
 And here's no heart
 Hath lot or part
 With sacred faith's reviler ;
 Nor here's the lip
 Hath yearned to sip
 The flesh-pots of the spoiler !



MY BETROTHED—ERIN :

HER HYMN TO FREEDOM.

Oh, come, my betrothed, to thine anxious bride,
Too long have they kept thee from my side !
Sure I sought thee by mountain and mead, asthore !
And I watched and I wept till my heart was sore,
While the false to the false did say :
We will lead her away by the mound and the rath,
And we'll nourish her heart in its worse than death,
Till her tears shall have traced a pearly path,
For the work of a future day.

Ah, little they knew what their guile could do !
It has won me a host of the stern and true,
Who have sealed in the eye of the yellow sun
That my home is their hearts till thy hand be won :

And they've gathered my tears and sighs ;
And they've woven them into a cloudy frown,
That shall gird my brow like an ebony crown,
Till these feet in my wrath shall have trampled down
All, all that betwixt us rise.

Then come, my betrothed, to thine anxious bride,
Thou art dear to my breast as my heart's red tide,
And a wonder it is you could tarry so long,
And your soul so proud and your arm so strong,
And your limb without a chain ;
And your feet in their flight like the midnight wind,
When he “ bahs ! ” at the flash that he leaves behind ;
And your heart so warm, and your look so kind—
Oh, come to my breast again !

Oh my dearest has eyes like the noon tide sun ;
So bright, that my own dare scarce look on :
And the clouds of a thousand years gone by,
Brought back, and again on the crowded sky,
Heaped haughtily pile o'er pile ;
Then all in a boundless blaze outspread,
Rent, shaken, and tossed o'er their flaming bed,
Till each heart by the light of the heavens were read,
Were as nought to his softest smile !

And to hear my love in his wild mirth sing
To the flap of the battle-god's fiery wing !
How his chorus shrieks through the iron tones
Of crashing towers and creaking thrones,

 And the crumbling of bastions strong !
Yet, sweet to my ear as the sigh that slips
From the nervous dance of a maiden's lips,
When the eye first wanes in its love eclipse,

 Is his soul-creating song !

Then come, my betrothed, to thine anxious bride !
Thou hast tarried too long, but I may not chide ;
For the prop and the hope of my home thou art,
Ay, the vein that suckles my growing heart :

 Oh, I'd frown on the world for thee !
And it is not a dull, cold, soulless clod,
With a lip in the dust at a tyrant's nod,
Unworthy one glance of the patriot's god,
 That you ever shall find in me !

YOUNG ERIN'S CREED.

WHOEVER crawls, whoever leads,
Young Erin's creed's the creed of creeds ;
It teaches, give your Maker praise
Whatever way your conscience says !
But should a thousand altars bear
On each for Heaven a different prayer ;
By light of moon, or light of sun,
At Freedom's let us all be one !—
Is that a creed to blast or ban ?

Young Erin's creed hath scattered coals
Upon the ices of our souls ;
And thawed those sad sectarian snows,
From which our every ruin rose ;
It nurses hopes, they foster deeds,
It tells us when a nation bleeds ;

The holy union of our hands—
Not riven ranks and broken brands—
Can force from foes what right demands !

Then Heaven guide young Erin's creed
Till by its holiest light we read
In every eye, our Island through,
The fearless soul that ripe to do
Whate'er the God of Nations wills
To these, our grand old native hills :
And if it melt old Ireland's chain,
May't purge our souls from every stain,
Could tend to forge or bind again.

O N A G A I N .

AND so the would-be storm is past,
And truemen have outlived it ;
Can truth be bowed by falsehood's blast,
They're slaves who e'er believed it :
Let cravens crawl and adders hiss,
And foes look on delighted !
To one and all our answer's this—
We're wronged, and must be righted.
Then on again,
A chain's a chain,
And though a king should make it,
Be this our creed,
A slave indeed
Is he who dare not break it.
'Tis not in slander's poisonous lips
To kill the patriot's ardour ;
Their blight may reach the blossom-tips,
But not the fount of verdure :
For he who feels his country's dole,
By nought can be confounded,
But onward sweeps his fearless soul,
Though death were walking round it :

Then on again,
A chain's a chain,
And though a king should make it,
A slave, though freed,
Were he indeed,
Who dare not try to break it.

And while ye guard against the shoals
That hide each past endeavour,
Give freemen's tongues to truemen's souls,
Or drop the terms for ever :
Let baseness wander through the dark,
And hug its own restriction,
But oh ! be ours the guiding spark !
Produced by mental friction :
Then on again,
A chain's a chain,
And though a king should make it,
Be this our creed,
A slave indeed
Is he who dare not break it.

WE'VE PONDERED.

WHAT though we've looked in silence
On our country's brightening eyes,
Was our silence not prophetic
Of a soul about to rise ?
As the infant tempest sleepeth
On the bosom of the cloud,
Till its ripened spirit boundeth
In a fire-flashing shroud ;
So ariseth gallant Ulster
In her firm and fearless few,
With the fires of their fathers,
And their love of Erin too.

For we've pondered
As we wandered
On our isolated way ;
Till your Ulstermen
And Orangemen
Are Irishmen to-day !

And the past shall be forgotten,
With its days of death and gloom,
When the eye of desolation
Opened with our gardens' bloom ;
And our shamrocks and our lilies
Shed confusion o'er our souls,
When we might have traced a heaven
Round their green and golden bowls ;
But oh ! if for a moment
We have sought a darker track,
There's a warm and weeping welcome
For the hearts that venture back.
And we've pondered
As we wandered
Like a flock had gone astray,
Till your Ulstermen
And Orangemen
Are Irishmen to-day.

For the healing words are spoken ;
We are brothers—ay, and true !
Then arouse, arouse thee, Erin !
For thy foes are ours, too.
And we'll chase the demon, Discord,
From our bosoms and our path ;
And we'll brush her every poison
From our flowers and our heath.
Ay, we'll rival e'en our fathers
And their fellow-martyred ones,
Till their spirits leap in glory
O'er the ardour of their sons.

We've been riven,
 We've been driven,
 The crafty spoiler's prey,
 But your Ulstermen
 And Orangemen
 Are Irishmen to-day.



FOUR ON THE STEM.

Oh, who has not heard of the mystical power
 Which lives in that sweet little emerald flower,
 So rare in the valley, so prized in the bower,
 Our dear little, rare little, eye-opening gem ?

So beaming, so teeming
 With beauty and wonder,
 When magic and logic
 Are sporting their thunder ;
 And riving and driving
 Your senses asunder :

Oh, seek ye a shamrock with four on the stem !

When wizards were charming, with mystical bothers,
 The eyes and the ears of our elf-fearing mothers,
 It winged each delusion, or so said our fathers,
 And why should their children its powers condemn ?

Then up with it, step with it,
 Up with it merrily ;
 Roses and posies
 Are drooping so drearily ;
 Lying and dying,
 And Erin so cheerily

Mocking delusion with four on the stem !

And now that our elves and their castles of ether
 (Since Erin and knowledge were talking together)
 Have changed into goblins of sabre and feather,

The four-in-one-flower shall reason condemn ?
 Oh no, men ! for foemen
 And malice and knavery,
 Slipped round us, and bound us
 In darkness and slavery,
Then led us and bled us,
 In spite of our bravery,
For this—we could number but three on the stem !

Then hail to the union of spirits and flowers !
The past to the foe, but the future be ours ;
For Ulster has found in her own blooming bowers,
 The gay golden leaf that completed the gem.
 Then up with it, step with it,
 Up with it merrily ;
 Forward ! from norward
 And southward come cheerily ;
 Munster and Leinster
 And Connaught unwearily
Tell Erin's foes she has four on the stem !

THE TYRANT WOOER.

He came in the pride of his ill-got power,
 To the cot of the slumbering fair ;
And he twined the leaves of a blood-red flower
 In the folds of her raven hair ;
But her heart grew sick at its strange perfume,
 Though her lips refused to speak,
And it savoured so much of the scaffold and tomb,
 That it paled the maiden's cheek ;
But lo ! it grew bright on her fading bloom,
 And strong, as her heart grew weak.

Then he talked of love and he talked of truth,
 And his pastures broad and fair ;
And he talked of her helplessness and youth,
 And the growth of her worldly care ;

Yea, and more than these—though how strange to tell !

He had written their marriage bands
In the blood of the brave she had loved so well,
When it flowed by his murderous hands,
But he wooed and won, and his victors' yell
Rings yet o'er her father's lands !

But where is the love and the truth, he said,
That her merits should still command ?
Or where are the sacred vows he made,
When he took her reluctant hand ?
They were thrown aside with the bridal wreath,
Ere the festival writes were by :
And that marriage was fraught with the shadow of
death,
To her every peace and joy ;
For his vows have hung like a blighting breath,
O'er the light of her lovely eye.

But she sorrows not now, nor weeps alone,
Nor now are her cheeks so pale ;
For her sons have at length to manhood grown—
Ay, and studied their mother's tale :
And her tears they term a refreshing dew,
That had fallen in her night's despair ;
But they say it is stealing the blood-red hue
From the wreath in their mother's hair ;
And that she will smile as she used to do,
When it glistens no longer there !

TO A TIPPERARY MAN.*

SING on, my Tipperary bird,
Nor care for foes a feather ;
Sing on till every melting word
Has fused our souls together :

* A Contributor to the *Nation*.

And formed a bulwark round our Isle
 Of life and love united ;
With mind and might to task and toil,
 Till every wrong be righted.

Nor think our Northern bosoms cold,
 Nor that our weapons waver ;
For every crag we climed of old,
 We've nerve as firm as ever :
And souls as ripe to chase the game,
 Whatever track it flies on ;
And fixed as is the freezing flame
 That lights our own horizon.

For glowing heart and ready hand,
 Shall Antrim yield to no one ;
And they who nobly meet a friend,
 Can nobly meet a foeman :
The cold in cloth are cold in steel,
 Howe'er the hand may labour ;
For what's it but the hero's zeal
 That wields the hero's sabre ?

Then on ! my Tipperary heart,
 Or snow or blow the weather ;
For now nor cold, nor drove apart,
 We'll brave the blast together :
'Twas thus of old our brave and bold
 Laid shoulder up to shoulder,
When they who sought to make the slave
 As often made the soldier.

Oh, deathless men, and deathless days,
 To what have tyrants brought us ?
'Twere even wrong to sing your praise—
 This ruinous creed they've taught us ;
But though they teach or though they preach,
 Or though their hosts surround us,
The glory of those days shall stretch
 A burning rampart round us !

Till concord round each bastion sings,
 The bloodless triumph's ours ;
 And Freedom's cloud-dividing wings
 Begird the Isle of Flowers :
 And now the arm, and now the light
 Of soul that never varies,
 With three hurrahs for Antrim's might,
 And nine for Tipperary's !

REMEMBER THE THIRTIETH OF MAY.*

REMEMBER it ! yes, every year as it rolls
 Shall but widen and deepen its track in our souls :
 Oh, how could the echo one moment depart
 That the crash of that hour awaked in each heart ?
 It shall sing, it shall ring in the lowliest home,
 Like the song of the wave in its holiday foam ;
 Till as one mighty billow our spirits unite
 In as brilliant, as bounding, as chainless a might ;
 And till tyranny looks o'er our Island in vain
 For the face of a slave, or the trace of a chain.
 Oh, the green of our valleys shall frown into gray,
 Ere we cease to remember the Thirtieth of May !

'Twas a day over Erin when deep as of death
 Was the ominous silence that fettered each breath ;
 For oh, think ! how the heart of a nation was wrung,
 When the sigh from her soul fell asleep on her tongue !
 How she stooped to the blow, how she smothered the ire
 That heaved in her breast like a volcanic fire ;
 For true were the chieftains who whispered "refrain,"
 And their words to her arm were an adamant chain :
 And she saw them her bravest, the blood of her heart,
 For the love they had borne her like felons depart.
 Oh ! soulless and dark were our bosoms of clay,
 Should we cease to remember the Thirtieth of May.

* The day on which the leaders of the Repeal movement were incarcerated.

'Twas a morning of mist, 'twas an evening sublime,
'Twas a cloud that arose on the carry of time ;
Stupendous, gigantic in darkness and wrong,
But melting to light as it glided along :
For out of its blackness a brightness arose ;
And numberless friends, out of numberless foes,
Proclaimed to the wronger his mightiest dart,
So far from transfixing young Liberty's heart,
But gave her a pinion to rise o'er the storm,
And a stay to her foot, and a nerve to her arm.
Oh ! nations and sceptres shall moulder away,
Ere we cease to remember the Thirtieth of May.

And the foeman may think that thy voice, Mullaghmast,
Was a sound but to float on the ear of the past ;
He may think, as our myriads are marshalled no more,
He has tamed or extinguished the spirit they bore.
Does the tempest-king die—does his spirit grow tame
When he folds up his pinions of whirlwind and flame ?
Yet awhile, and your forests before him are hurled,
As he wheels in his flight o'er a quivering world :
Thus, Erin but nurseth the might of her wing,
For a bold, for a proud, and more heavenward spring :
For deep in that spirit which resteth to-day,
Is our motto, " Remember the Thirtieth of May ! "

A SONG OF ULSTER.

AND, ULMSTERMEN, is this the soil
Our fathers loved so dearly well ?
And shall we 'mid their ashes toil,
And not the same proud feeling tell ?
Forbid it, honour, truth and pride !
The gems unsold their bosoms bore ;
And let us prove, if rightly tried,
We're all the Ulstermen of yore.

Sing, oh ! the land,
The blooming land,
The land our fathers loved so dear :
May sorrow crush
The wretch who'd blush
His father's love of home to hear !

And Ulster, thou hast seen a day
When tales of pride were thine to tell ;
But discord cleared the Dutchman's way,
And we from all our glory fell :
And groaning only to her God
Our country wore a double chain ;
But fifty years of stripes and fraud
Have surely raised a soul again.

Sing, oh ! the land,
The groaning land,
The land our fathers loved so dear ;
May blushing crush
The wretch who'd blush
His father's love of home to hear !

Shall alien courts, or foreign crowns,
Have merchandize in honest hearts,
And by or ban our smiles or frowns,
As suit their own unholy arts ?
No ! from the unpolluted veins
That clothed the graves we gaze upon,
We'll prove no father scorned his chains
That did not leave as proud a son !

Sing, oh ! the land,
The lovely land,
The land our fathers loved so dear ;
May sorrow pale
The wretch who'd quail
His father's love of home to hear !

Too long have we the truant played,
And slept or waked as tyrants taught ;
Too long, unthinking, lend our aid
To rear a foreign Juggernaut :

Nor claimed nor owned a native land ;
 Mere birds of passage, homeless guests ;
 We only loved the alien hand
 That wrung the manhood from our breasts.
 Sing, oh ! the land,
 The slighted land,
 The land our fathers loved so dear ;
 May feeling crush
 The wretch who'd blush
 His father's love of home to hear !
 How wrong we were our homes declare !
 How mad exclaims the seedless earth !
 Where maniac famine rends her hair,
 Or huddles o'er the fireless hearth ;
 Ah, men might melt their eyes like rain,
 But *men* have nobler work to do ;
 Nor shall we halt till every vein
 The fire of freedom rushes through.
 Sing, oh ! the land,
 The awakened land,
 The land that holds our fathers' clay.
 May love of sire
 Each soul inspire
 To cheer her on her glorious way !
 What, what were ours but milky blood,
 If tame and coldly we could stand,
 When lightning-limbed young Nationhood
 Is more than midway with her hand :
 She comes, she comes, and we've delayed !
 Up, factious folly ! from our shore ;
 For, true as truth, thine upas' shade
 Must mantle Ulster's soul no more !
 Sing, oh ! the land,
 The infant land,
 The growing Isle of bounding soul ;
 May sorrow wet
 His cheek who'd fret
 To see her in at glory's goal

A N A D D R E S S .

To say we could have loved thee,
Were to show a bloodless heart ;
To name the thing we've proved thee,
Were to act as weak a part :
To leave, of all thy story,
E'en a jot unsung, unpenned,
Were to leave a ray of glory
Where no glory hath a friend !

But, sing thee ! ay, we'll sing thee,.
Till the winds from other climes,
In their softest mood shall bring thee
But the echoes of thy crimes :
For thou drove us, wrung and reckless,
To the brink of death and shame,
Till we looked, thou mass of blackness,
And destruction was thy name !

And thinkest thou a nation
Shall beneath thee crawl and whine ;
Or think'st thou her salvation
Lies within those lips of thine :
And though it did, sweet heaven !
To thy winds we'd fling the whole,
Ere she should bend the craven
To yon worse than midnight soul.

Reck we thy soothing speeches,
Or thine upas-breathing sighs ?
Don't the past and present teach us
'Tis the false hyena cries ?
Oh, the hearts thou'st bled and broken,
Were they at thy footstool cast,
What a bloody mountain token
Would arise of favours past !

With thy boons and blessings holy,
Thou wouldest lull our ills asleep ;
Thou wouldest mourn each feud and folly,
Ay, when stones have learned to weep ;

Thou wouldst lead in one communion
All the children of thy care ;
Yea, thou wouldst ! and our disunion
Proves thy gospel to a hair.

Thy promises, confound them,
And the ear would drink their bane ;
There's a clank of chains around them—
Ay, when in their sweetest strain :
And though as far from fetters
As the wind o'er ocean's brow,
There's a gulf of putrid waters
Gathers round a broken vow !

And its soul-corroding odour
Rides upon thine every breath ;
For the heavens are not broader
Than from truth has been thy path :
And we could have sorrowed o'er thee,
Like the cloud o'er thirsty grain,
But that day's a by-gone story,
Shall not meet thine ear again.

No ! our last love thou uprooted,
When thy menial, liveried things,
With their craven hands polluted
E'en the offspring of our kings ;
But an ominous day hath risen,
When our millions' lips proclaim,
That a seat within thy prison
Makes a more than martyr's fame !

Oh, the days of wrong are numbered !
For the spirit that hath lain
Through centuries, and slumbered,
Shouts upon our hills again :
And as shrieks some mighty river
That hath overgrown control,
So its thunder-notes shall quiver
Through each chamber of thy soul !

Yet, dream'st thou nought can move thee
 From thy towers of starry height ?
 Ha ! the brightest sky above thee
 Is but gleams of passing light :
 For thou, and borrowed power,
 And thy blood-based pomp and pride,
 Make this—a varnished flower
 On a huge volcano's side !



LOVE IN THE COUNTRY.

TALK of their towns ! Oh ! they ne'er had a charm for me,
 Fashion's a Tyrant, and Art is his slave !
 Next to high heaven is glowing Glenarm for me—
 Glowing in glories of mountain and wave !
 What, though from pole to pole,
 Gladness or gloom should roll,
 Come, thou, that guid'st the whole—
 Purity's own !
 Close to me—cling to me—chastely as stone—
 Nearer, thou !
 Dearer, now !
 Life of my bounding soul !
 Oh ! what a lightning-wing'd moment hath flown !
 Oh ! for the tall crag, and, 'neath it, a holy home,
 Azure and snowy sheets 'round and above !
 Here, while the hurricane chants to the flying foam,
 Under the white cliff, we'll dance to it, love !
 Quick !—comb and curl apart,
 Nature we own—not Art !
 Soul to soul, let us dart ;
 Moment of bliss !
 Haste with your bursting lip's holiest kiss.
 Press me, love !
 Bless thee, love !
 Girl of my glowing heart !
 Love is of Heaven, and Heaven's of this !

THE BRIDGE OF THE BUSH.

The readers of the *Dublin University Magazine* will recognise several of the scraps in this collection. The following verses also appeared in our national periodical, and were there, by some mistake, ascribed to another contributor—a most worthy one. If there be anything creditable in the lines, the name of Mortimer Collins can well afford to part with it; if there be anything otherwise, it has no right to be charged therewith.

WORN was he, lorn was he,
Wand'ring one morn was he—
Ringing and singing
Were hazel and thrush :
There, too, a maiden,
Her white feet all laden
With daisies and dew,
By the Bridge of the Bush.

Fair was she, rare was she,
Sun-tint of hair was she ;
Dew-eyes, and blue, as
The bosom of space :
Wild rose, ah ! never,
You hung o'er that river,
So rich as the light
In young Emily's face !

Pale was he, frail was he,
Grieved at his ail was she :
Soothing and smoothing
His pillow, sits she ;
Kind, too, her father—
Nine long weeks together—
Till heart-whole, and gay,
The frail wanderer is he.

Sue did he, woo did he,
All guile could do, did he !
Sadly—ah ! madly,
Her soul felt the crush :
Dark runs the water,
They've searched for their daughter,
And lone is her grave,
By the Bridge of the Bush !

S E A V I E W .

SEAVIEW of groves sitteth, mantled in light,
 Down where the ocean-wave, cityward wending,
 Quivers in beauty, each muscle of might,
 Strained to the snowy sails over it bending ;
 Breezes there gliding
 Down from their hilly homes, wheel in their flight,
 Sporting or chiding.

Proudly the sky, o'er that sky-glassing tide,
 Passion-browed—sun or cloud—ever o'erfloweth,
 As mother might hang o'er her cradled pride,
 While its blessed breath cometh and goeth,
 Troubling it mildly ;
 Seaview of songs, by the sea-spirit's side,
 Carolling wildly !

Seaview of flowers, like a heaven new-born,
 Streams through the minstrel man's vision of beauty ;
 Flower of its flowers, though, reigns the Red Thorn,
 Gleaming, like soul, through a saint at her duty,
 Blessings bestowing—
 Sheeting the lawn, till it meeteth the morn,
 In rose-light glowing !

Crimson and golden, and pencill'd with snow,
 Bride of the young year, oh, bright is thy mantle !
 Many a May hast thou hallowed us so,
 Sister of sunbeams—the dazzling—the gentle—
 Blushing so freshly !
 Far be the finger one sweet leaf might know
 Crumpling it rashly !

Beauty and innocence ! oh, that we might
 Ne'er wear the winning ray destined to grieve you !
 Guile, like a shadow, pursueth the light—
 Mother of breathing gems !—glory of Seaview !
 Darkening it ever :
 Beauty, once clasped, on its bosom of night,
 Brightens—ah, never !

Tree of the crimson robe ! seasons rush on :
 Beauty nor odour of Earth is undying :
 Lo ! where thine glistens, like drops from the sun,
 Thine—even now!—on the green sward lying—
 Lovely, though lowly—
 Breathing in death, as when life was begun,
 Odours all holy !

Mother of starry drops ! beauty 's of God,
 Given, like wealth, not alone for the wearer :
 Life, though a cloudy swamp, beareth abroad
 Something to solace each weary wayfarer :
 Beauties, where any
 Shine, from the human cheek down to the sod,
 Shine for the many !

THE FAIRY MIRROR:

A ROMANCE OF "THE OLD LODGE," BELFAST.

To the Memory of SAMUEL M'DOWELL ELLIOTT, Esq., late Seneschal of Belfast and proprietor of the Old Lodge, the following little Romance is inscribed by the writer, with a tearful recollection of his friendship and genuine warmth of heart, and a sincere veneration for the breadth and liberality of his views, religious and political.

WHEN our globe swam, fresh and fruitful,
 Through an ever cloudless blue,
 And the sapphire gates of Heaven
 Their celestial bolts withdrew,
 Till the brightness of the Highest
 Sat and shone on human clay,
 And the light round Adam's daughters
 Led the sons of God astray ;
 Then each star-crowned Seraph, yielding
 To unhallowed love's embrace,
 Saw his offspring grow a people
 Lost to glory, though in grace,
 And their glittering crowds inherit
 Hill and vale, and secret place—
 One part flesh and three parts spirit—
 The mysterious Fairy race.

Oh, how glorious were the daughters,
Quickened by those souls of fire,
But a fairer than Felicia
Never owned a spirit sire ;
And, within our Holy Erin,
'Tween the mountains and the strand,
Where the City-queen of Ulster,
And her guard of steeples stand,
Lay the glistening grove she haunted—
Nay, but lieth there to-day,
For what fairy feet have hallowed,
All immortal grows as they—
Glowing fresh as purple even',
While the world around grows gray—
Like a clear bright spot on Heaven,
When the storm-clouds o'er it stray.

And, to meet her Seraph lover,
Young Felicia glideth there,
With the dawn-spring's flashing roses
Melting through her streaming hair ;
And a cloud of golden vapour,
Like a curtained dome o'erhead—
Every rainbow fringe and tassel
Dancing to her swimming tread ;
Or its still, small, ghostly music,
Which to human sense might seem
Like an infant's song from Heaven,
Trembling through a mother's dream ;
Ever flees she thus, and ever
Through each future's pearly gleam,
Do the soul's deep thinkings quiver,
As might moonlight through a stream !

Human feelings !—human feelings !

What are ye to those that leap
Through that spirit-beauty's pulses,
Like a storm in sullen sleep ?

For, within yon wizard bower,
Said her Seraph, they shall meet,
When he'll cast his robe of glory
At the fairy-virgin's feet:
Yea, and there she now beholds him,
Like a glistening tower of snow,
Where the Eve-king's burning banners
O'er the glacier'd turrets glow:
Yea, beholds that soul of sorrow—
Pining—shining to and fro—
Who hath lost the Heavenly Flora,
For one passion-flower below !

Oh, the might of bliss forbidden,
How it roots in heart and brain !
Love, in chains, hath souls cemented
Where "go free" the god had slain !
Thus that radiant love-denied one
Towards his dear dethroner springs ;
But, oh, hark !—the clouds above him !
Ah, your bolts have withering wings !
Child of beauty—child of passion !
Where's he now you yearned to greet ?
Like a mass of molten sunbeams,
Shivering—quivering at thy feet :
Yea and thus for aye and ever
Shall his glistening pulses beat,
Life in death, but dying never—
Life itself his winding sheet.

Now the quivering mass before her
Takes a moon-like form and hue ;
Now a wild and withering anguish
Smites Felicia through and through,
Till the lightnings of her spirit
Flash and flutter through each vein,
And the tears of living fire
Tremble backwards on her brain ;

And her reeling Reason whispers :
 " Life eternal's at his core,
 Yea, and high o'er earth and water
 Shall my Seraph shine and soar ! "
 Ah, 'tis false ! — wild spirit-daughter ! —
 Down again the flame-sheets pour :
 Now, a larger, living water
 Lights the arbour—nothing more !
 Daily brighter beamed that arbour—
 Flashing like an em'rald bowl ;
 Daily brighter shone its waters—
 Shone that mass of molten soul ;
 And when by its silvery circle,
 Two adoring lovers stood,
 Ever rose two radiant faces,
 Smiling on them from the flood ;
 But might e'er one trait'rous feeling,
 Either gazer's heart beget,
 Darkness wrapped the mystic crystal
 Till each ripple rolled in jet ;
 And though mountains, seas and rivers,
 Since, the common fate havè met,
 There that Fairy Mirror quivers,
 In the " Old Lodge " arbour yet !

THE BRIDE OF THE WATER :

A LEGEND OF RATHLIN AND FAIRHEAD.

RATHLIN—the Rionia of Pliny, the Ricina of Ptolemy, the Riduna of Antoninus, and Raclinda, of Buchanon—is a small island, which lies off the Northern coast of Antrim, in North latitude 55 degrees 15 seconds; its extreme length, from East to West, is five and a half English miles, and its greatest breadth one mile and a quarter. The form of the island, it appears, has been compared to that of a boot; or, as Sir William Petty tells us, "to that of an Irish stockin', the toe of which pointeth to the mainland." On this mainland, and immediately opposite the toe alluded to, from which it is distant about three miles, stands a magnificent range of basaltic pillars, 283 feet high, which, resting on a base of 548 feet, gives the promontory an altitude of 831 feet above the level of the sea. This glorious pile of Nature's own masonry, now Fairhead, was once Benmore, by some supposed to be

the Robogdium of Ptolemy. Accounting for the change of name, there is among the natives—a simple, industrious people—a small, misty remnant of tradition to the following effect:—At some indefinitely remote period of the world's history, Rathlin was invaded by a chieftain, with his forces from some of the neighbouring islands. He was vanquished. All his followers, with the exception of his henchman, were slain, and the chieftain himself mortally wounded. Lying upon the sward in his last agonies, he besought the victorious king of the island to suffer his beautiful daughter to solace a dying man by "Running a reel" upon the green turf with his henchman. The victor consented; the lady danced, and the henchman—at a signal from his master—having watched for a favourable moment, caught her in his arms, and leaped, with his fair burthen, from the top of a fearful precipice into the surges at its base. The next morning the corpse of the lady was discovered at the foot of Benmore, on the opposite side of the water, the head resting upon a gray pentagonal fragment of the mass above it. This legend formed the subject of a short prose tale, from the pen of the present writer, which appeared, a few years ago, in the pages of a Dublin periodical. The concluding lines of this tale afterwards introduced the following stanzas to some of our readers, in the columns of a local publication. Let them here perform the same office:—

"The mourners say, 'It is a fair head,' little thinking that the saying is immortal. In that hour, Benmore renounced its name—a name it had borne for ages—and received a new one: it was no longer called Benmore, but Fairhead; and the spirit of Ulster's sorrow and the tears of the islands were the officiating priest and the water of baptism."

'Tis morn at Ricina, and, south a league, sightly
Benmore, with his shade, the blue water stains lightly;
'Tis morn at Ricina, and, west from the castle,
That rings with the revel of chieftain and vassal,
A kingly-brow'd youth and a virgin, not lowly—
Where flaunts the young wave, in green robe and white
tassel—

Fuse spirit through spirit, in whispers, so holy,
White Truth, by her altar, each breath might have
caught her—
That maiden's young Mina, the Bride of the Water.

And Mina M'Phie's like an angel, in nature,
In spirit, in feature, in form, and in stature:
What snow glides so gently, or, gliding, is whiter?
What glory so bright, that her cheek is not brighter?

Her eyes like the skies or the blue cineraria—
Her ringlets like gold, or the faintest shade lighter—
A tint like the moon's when the harvest is near ye.'

Oh, fondly some weird-woman named her and thought her,
“ The swan of the rock—the white Bride of the Water !”

Her father is lord of the crag and the claghan ;
Her lover is Connor, the kingly O’Cahan ;
And thrice hath the sun, like a god, in east-heaven,
Thus lighted the waves, since the Chief of Dungiven
Left home, stag and steed, for the rocks of Ricina—
For hope from the glance that his spirit had riven,
Yea, life from the lips of the soul-witching Mira :
She sings him the strains that the surges have taught
her,
For Connor is loved by the Bride of the Water.

Oh, westward, in heaven, when rosy clouds linger,
Like floating isles warm from the Maker’s own finger,
Cold, cold were their tints, in their brightest of brightness,
To those which, o’er Mira’s tall forehead of whiteness,

Now coming, now going, are ebbing, are flowing,
Till up, like a phantom of feathery lightness,

In gloom and in glory, now darkling, now glowing,
She shrieks, “ Tashitarraugh* hath visions of slaughter—
Oh ! God, in his might—to the Bride of the Water !

“ Ah ! say, on this lone island-throne of the tempest,
Dark, death-telling raven, why thus thou encampest,
Here love, in his heart-home shall reign ever regal—
‘ False—false !’ croaks the raven ; ‘ yea, false !’ quoth the
eagle ;

‘ For many an eye shall to-morrow leave beamless,
And when, ’neath our beaks and the fangs of the beagle,

Be caurnach and gilliglass, stark-laid and dreamless,
This isle of the surge, with the gory draught brought her,
Shall drink thy red tears, snowy Bride of the Water !”

‘ Tis eve o’er the sea where the white stars are twinkling,
And fifty broad blades the blue waters are sprinkling,

* Second-sight.

Strong muscles to wield them—stern spirits of fire—
 Their chieftain, tall Mahon M'Kaye, of Cantyre,
 Whose curraghs shall dance, ere the night-cloud be
 melted,
 Where waves, when asleep, are still waves in their ire,
 And rugged Ricina stands bald and white-belted ;*
 For Mahon has sworn, or by love or by slaughter,
 To bow thy proud spirit, fair Bride of the Water !
 'Tis morn at Ricina—the broad sun's advancing,
 His arrows of gold round the ocean-bird's glancing,
 When, lo ! like an oak, in the last light of autumn,
 M'Phie's by the blades that the stranger hath brought
 him :

" Ho ! son of Cantyre ! what seek'st thou, my marrow—
 A feast by the wave, or a bed at its bottom—
 A rest, and our love, or our axe, skean and arrow ?"
 " Proud prince of the sea-mew, your death or your
 daughter!"

Return'd thy wild wooer, white Bride of the Water !

As sweep, when the night waxeth sickly and sallow,
 Plumèd columns of mist over gray Slac-na-callagh,†
 So glide, at the signal, from castle and claghan,
 The iron-limb'd islanders, led by O'Cahan—

A *clairsach* in love, but a tempest in ire.

" Faith, chieftain," quoth Gille, the henchman of Mahon,
 And lightest of foot ever danced on Cantyre,
 " 'Tis more than a chant or a chase of the otter,
 This wooing and winning your Bride of the Water!"

'Tis eve at Ricina—the moon is ascending ;
 One golden-haired star, like a page, out attending ;
 The conflict is over, and thus goes its story :
 The might of Cantyre lies withering and gory ;

* Rathlin produces nothing deserving the name of timber. Even its shrubbery is scarce and stunted. The island, which rises abruptly from the sea, to a considerable height, exhibits, on the Ballycastle, or coast side, about midway, between its surface-soil and the water, a broad band, or stratum of white limestone.

† A district of the island is so called.

But who is the warrior stricken and lying,
Where towers the steep o'er the surge in its glory ?

'Tis Mahon M'Kaye, and the chieftain is dying ;
Around him are weepers, unscath'd by the slaughter—
And low, with them, kneeleth the Bride of the Water.

" Oh ! light of the wave—sun and moon of Ricina"—
Thus whisper'd the dying—" Ah, Mina ! ah, Mina !
If wild was my wooing, when scorned as a lover,
This stream, from my breast, to the crime be a cover :

And grant thou a boon, 'tis the last of my seeking,
This sward with my henchman but thrice to dance over—

Then thou to thy love, and my heart — to — its
breaking !"

'Twas the white lips of death that so strangely besought
her,

And, weeping, consented the Bride of the Water.

One kiss from O'Cahan ! the henchman advances—

Away fly their feet through the wildest of dances—

Now hither—now thither—now stumbling—now steady—
They crown the cliff-top, when—" Ho ! vengeance ! all's
ready—

Away !" groaned the chief, " And to God go the
worthy !"

Return'd the fleet youth, as he clasped the white lady ;

One whirl, shriek and leap, and the dancers ! where
are they ?

Oh ! red are the crag and surge—low 'neath the latter,
Thy death-dance is ended, young Bride of the Water !

'Tis morn at Benmore, where, all pallid and dripping,
The Bride of the Water lies breathlessly sleeping.

Oh ! white are the waves from her beauty receding,
But whiter's that forehead, still fresh in its bleeding ;

And many the mourners, who, wild in their weeping,
Sob, " Fair is that head ;" but how little they're heeding

The Spirit that taketh their words in His keeping,
To bless, to bequeath them—immortal as matter—
A name to Benmore, the " Fair-head " of the water !

OUR COAST.

TRAVELLERS have agreed that, for bold, rugged beauty, with a tolerable sprinkling of both the wonderful and sublime, the northern coast of Antrim has few superiors. The following lines, however, have no pretensions to be descriptive of "Our Coast." While being written, they were simply intended to serve as the opening stanzas of a sort of poetic tale, or rhymed romance; but, as they extended beyond what was desirable in a mere apostrophe to the scene of a story's action, the writer has been advised to introduce them to his readers independent of other matter.

GOD bless the towers and temples,
 And those cloud-dividing piles,
 The heathery-mantled mountains,
 Of our green old queen of Isles !
 Yea, may God, the Blesser, bless them,
 When His choicest love outpours,
 Though they be not these, the peerless,
 That the minstrel more adores ;
 For no work of mighty nature,
 For our wonder or our weal,
 Nor a stone that ever tinkled
 'Neath the craftsman's quiet steel,
 Could the marvel—the emotion—
 Looking love so like devotion—
 From the secret springs of feeling,
 In my spirit-depths command,
 That can these, the mountain pillars
 Of our Dalriadan* land—
 These iron-crested sentinels
 That guard our northern strand,
 That like a host in battle line,
 Or wall of wintry clouds,
 Save where some wizard, vale, or bay
 Divides the craggy crowds—

* Dalriada, which about the beginning of the third century, received its name from Carbry Riada, grandson to "Con, of the Hundred Battles"—not "bottles," as some has had it—comprehended the North, North-West, and part of the South of the County Antrim. It was altogether distinct from "Dalaradia," with which, it appears, it has sometimes been confounded. The latter comprehended, according to Harris, the South-East part of the same county, and the greatest portion, if not all of the County Down.

Run writhed in savage glory,
 From the Causeway's pillar'd shore
 To that kingly cape of columns,
 The sublimely-dark Benmore†—
 That mock the wintry surges
 In their hurricane career—
 That mar the howling spirit
 Of the lightning shaft and spear—
 That flaunt their cloudy helmets
 Through the silver of the moon,
 Nor always deign to doff them
 To the golden pomp of June.
 'Tis the teaching of the Maker,
 Through your cold eternal stone,
 Giant forms of that idea,
Let us bow to Mind alone!—
 'Tis the teaching of the Highest,
 That His sacred will is marred,
 When the creature, for its glory,
 Winneth worship or regard,
 Save the holy right of shining
 O'er the stricken and the lone;
 Or, where all is dark, reclining
 In a brightness not its own—
 That the moon is for the many,
 Not the many for the moon—
 That, thus, earth for all was hallowed,
 And the great design but followed,
 When the darkest soul of any
 Hath its own peculiar June.

Bless the teachers of such tenets,
 Be they spirit, stone, or steel,
 And these rocky chieftains, bless them,
 Thou, Jehovah, where I kneel!

† Benmore—One of the ancient names of Fairhead.

Oh ! ye high and heaven-crowned ones,
 Not a world of kingly gems
 Could my soul so God-enkindle
 As your craggy diadems !
 Mighty fruits of Mind gigantic,
 Grizzled, gloomy and sublime,
 Like to priestly watchers waiting
 For the dying shriek of Time—
 Watchers of the world's supernal !
 Peerless, priceless priests are ye,
 Tempest-shorn and dew-anointed,
 Foamy-robed and God-appointed,
 Sandal'd with the blue, eternal,
 Dazzling desert of the sea !

Ah ! they're more than priestly lessons,
 Preached in more than pulpit tones,
 Where your mountain-limbs are rooted,
 Where the baffled billow groans,
 Where the coast-born peasant ponders,
 Backward as the waters roll,
 Till your iron self-dependence
 Sheathes his roughly-noble soul ;
 For, as e'en the bard inspired,
 Through the sunlight of his song,
 Poureth but the tints of visions
 That his soul hath walked among ;
 But the grossness or the glory,
 Amid which his spirit swimmeth,
 Ever growing black or beauteous
 As the dark or light he hymneth,
 So the mass of Mind is modell'd
 By the forms on which it rests,
 And a tone and colour taketh
 From its oftener-coming guests ;
 Yea, as river-roads are fashioned
 By the water's rush and whirl,
 While their tinge and taste are taken
 By its sweeping crest and curl,

As it onward ever, ever
Maketh, taketh, foul, or fair,
Until neither bed nor river
May its first or fount declare—
So is formed the mental channel
By the might of sight and sound ;
So is tinged the moral current
By what eye and ear have found—
Until, from its race of ages,
Rolling basely or sublime,
It revealeth less our Adam
Than the accidents of time.

Then how few might be earth's shadows
On the moral current here,
Where young Beauty chaseth Beauty
Through and through the ringing year !
Happy, happy, peer or peasant,
Whose it were to ever be
By the creamy, creeping border
Of this fair mysterious sea ;
Where these shoreward-stealing waters
Many-tinted fringes weave,
As their foamy flowers are scatter'd
By the wanton breeze of eve'—
All his spirit gleaning sweetness,
Through a wild and dewy eye,
From the broad and burning roses
On the golden isles of sky.

By the white wave, Eastward wending
From the Causeway's column'd shore,
Gloom and glory round us blending,
Crag o'er crag to God ascending,
From the wild-sea's whirling roar,
Through five lingering leagues or more ;
Fixed in lowly, holy bending,
Worship we, as heretofore,
By this altar, huge and hoar ;

Wonders, wide and far-extending—
Darkly solemn, self-defending,
With our inmost soul contending—
'Tis thy forehead, blue Benmore !

Ah, ye strangely warm and zealous,
For the holy day of rest !

Say ye also, when ye tell us
Of each blighting ban address'd
To the Seventh-day profaner,
Whether, he, the stern abstainer,
From all touch that might defile,
Were the loser or the gainer,
By the maker's frown or smile,
Should he shun the city's leaven,
For a Sabbath on these sands,
Where to wander is to worship—
Yea, to know—the King of Heaven
Through the glory of His hands !

I've adored the God of Nature—
Yea, the universal Lord,
In the closet, at the altar,
On the sea, and on the sward ;
And I stood beneath these pillars—
'Twas a Sabbath morn in May—
And I felt—ah ! who can tell it ?
Never, never, lips of clay !

'Twas that heaving heart-devotion
That hath neither sigh nor prayer,
But a swelling and a rushing
In the inmost spirit, where
Ten thousand springs were gushing
It had ne'er been dreamt were there ;
And the on, and upward, springing
Of a faint and dreamy ringing,
As if of the passions singing
Through each fibre of the brain,
The battle-ground of many thoughts
That reeled and wheeled again ;

Then seethed in rushing roll,
Like fire-drops through the soul,
With a wildly-winning pain ;
Then a gazing up to Heaven—
Seeming less in life than death,
'Mid a quickening of the pulses,
And a shortening of the breath—
Then a bending towards the sod,
Sighing, “ light !—enough is given,
Let us bow before our God !”

Oh, beneath the holy altars
Consecrated to His name,
May we ever feel His presence,
As I know I felt the same
Here between those warring waters,
Where our Northern land is lost,
And that pillar'd pile, the glory
Of old Dalriada's coast.

There is grandeur in your city,
Where the sculptured columns soar,
And the sea of human beauty
Heaveth, heaveth evermore.

There is grandeur on yon mountain,
When, beneath the burning West,
Ten thousand tiny torches,
At as many pearly porches,
O'er that mountain's heathery breast,
Flash and twinkle—flash and twinkle,
As the dying day-beams sprinkle
Their red life-drops o'er its crest—

O'er that show'ry, flowery crest ;
While the rosy vapour, rising
Round the tomb of light supernal,
Floats and tinges—floats and tinges
Feathery clouds with snowy fringes,
'Till they meet the musing eye,
Like the locks of the Eternal
On that silv'ry waste of sky.

There is grandeur—there is grandeur
When the red sun disappears,
And the mourning face of Heaven
Waxeth bright with starry tears ;
Yea, above, below is grandeur,
When the dazzling day comes down,
Till each distant atom sparkles
Like some passing seraph's crown.
There is grandeur o'er the valley,
When along the shores of light
Floats a sea of twilight vapour
'Till the pine grove, tall and taper,
Wears the gloom of coming night ;
And the silent blast descendeth,
Swimming—skimming through the haze,
'Till the tassei'd grass-stalk bendeth,
As if trodden by your gaze ;
While across the rip'ning meadow
Fleeteth shadow after shadow ;
Gloomy spirits seem they passing,
O'er the sward their sadness tracing,
Where each unseen light-foot plays !
Oh ! there's beauty—oh ! there's beauty,
Seek we, turn we, where we will—
But a vision haunts my spirit
Of sublimer beauty still :
Be it—be it, Fate or Heaven—
Day and night, the blessed seven—
Be it mine to live and listen,
Where the stormy echoes ring,
When the Angel of the tempest
O'er these waters flaps his wing ;
And the waves, like white-robed choristers,
Wild hallelujahs sing—
Wild hallelujahs utter,
Or their deeper worship mutter
To the ALL of all rever'd,
Underneath each kingly column—

Nature-chiselled,
Stark and grizzled—
Of the stately, stern and solemn,
Huge and mystic, wild and weird,
Cavern'd, clouded, cleft and sear'd—
Temple of the Form of Wonder,
Once, in darkness, storm and thunder,
Amid earthquake anthems rear'd !



“LOW AND CLEAN:”

A HARVEST MELODY.

“Low and clean” (an injunction to cut low and gather clean) is the common property of every harvest-field in Ulster. It is as often used by the hired reaper, amongst his fellows, as by the farmer to his workmen. Besides being a command of carefulness and order, it is very often an expression of encouragement; depending principally for its character of the moment upon the tone and manner of the speaker, who, at times, varies it thus:—“Take it with you, low and clean.” The words are musical; and, what is more, whether Ulster's or not, they are characteristic of her to the marrow. The leader of the “boon,” or band, is “stubble-hook,” so called from his being employed on the open plot next to those which have been shorn; while “corn-land” occupies the ridge next to the standing grain, and may be looked upon as the driver. The shrewd farmer generally chooses two of his best shearers for these situations. He knows that each reaper from the leader to the driver is supposed to keep about the “making” of the sheaf in the rear of the hook immediately preceding him; that the line thus formed is, under ordinary circumstances, to be kept unbroken; and that, therefore, on the exertions of “stubble-hook” and “corn-land” depend, in a great measure, the amount of labour to be accomplished by the hooks at work between them. Although a spirited reaper, where there appears to be anything like equality of power, would “die upon the rig” before he would suffer “corn-land” to pass him, yet the line is not always permitted to observe its regularity. Indeed it might be said to be an unnaturally quiet “boon” that could suffer a “churn” to be won without some full blood or harum-scarum among its number, breaking the monotony of calm and constant labour by a challenge flung out after the following fashion:—“Weel-a-weel, weans dear, if ever I seed (saw) a day but what nicht or dinner-time wad come but this ane. Sorrow ha'e me, but it's awa' wi' John Nod (sleep) we'll be, in half a shake, if we dinna had tae't betther than this. Get alang oot o' there, wi' ye, auld henk o' mine ! Noo, then, weans ! first oot—first tae the dyke-side, for the makin' o' a smoke or a guid glass the piece tae usa' roun' on the nicht o' the kirn ! Hough ! Anthrim agin the warl’—the ducks tak' the hin'most !” And away cut the band, every man—and woman, too—to the “land-end,” with all the speed that can be put on. In mest

cases, the close of a set, or course shorn through the field, is followed by a short rest, a "blaw o' the cutty," a little chat, grave or gay, among the elders, as the mood may be, and, among the youngers, not unfrequently, a "bit stitch o' courtin'"—that in due time produces the ordinary amount of either happiness or misery. How much of both is often traceable to a few moments 'spent on the "land-end" of a "harvest-rig!"'

WHILE the snowy foot of dawn
Lights the dark it trembles on—
While the timid morning lingers,
Till each tress, with silvery fingers,
From her blushful brow is drawn :
Father, Thou who all preservest—
World and worm, and soul and soil,
God of seed-time and of harvest—
Guiding, guarding, may Thy smile
Gild the threshold of our toil !
May the morn of beauty sent us
Stretch to days of cloudless sheen ;
And, oh, Heaven ! as Thou has meant us
Stewards of this, the fruit-wealth lent us,
Bless the humble hands that glean,
Ridge and furrow, low and clean—
Hope of hundreds—low and clean !

Passing down the rustling vale,
Tawny ray and tripping gale
Chase the mist-flocks, midnight herded,
Flower of fruitage, bold and bearded,
Damply on thy golden mail !
Chased and chaser, let them pass us,
Till thy blades be crisp as rocks,
Then, O king of all the grasses,
God's own glory on thy locks,
Thine's the hour of sheaves and shocks !
Cheerily, then, oh, brother reapers—
While one standing stalk is seen,
Leaving dreams to seven-sleepers—
Drowsy, droning day-couch keepers—

Supple wrist and sickle keen,
Take it with you—low and clean—
Ridge and furrow—low and clean !

Ever thus, with jest and song,
May we laugh the ridge along !
“ Stubble-hook,” a sweeping sickle,
With a “ corn-land” full his equal—
May their “ gathering-hands” be strong !
Till the sweltering centre panteth,
Whispering, “ Well they wear their trust,”
And some brown-cheeked thinker chanteth :
Yield to Mind though Matter must,
Muscle’s made of glorious dust !
Ah ! remember, brother reapers,
Were our edges ne’er so keen,
“ Shall” and “ will” too oft are sleepers,
Till we wake them, bitter weepers,
Gazing where our hopes had been,
Now, with all their air-bell sheen,
Fallen—vanished—low and clean !

Hope and health and gratitude !
On, in bounding bone and blood !
Stride the field, like man and brother,
Life itself is such another—
Oh, to stride them as we should !
Meek on ridge—resigned in furrow—
Patient where the fair weed stings—
Plucking from each sweeping sorrow
Plumage for our spirit’s wings,
Mindful that each “ land-end” brings—
Howso’ high the hill we’re breasting—
Howso’ long the “ set” hath been—
Little flowery spots of resting,
Where, of dust our all divesting,
Low, on God’s embroidered green—
On or under—low and clean—
We may rest us—“ Low and Clean !”

THE CRANES-BILL.

THERE's a dear, wild glen, near our own Slieve-dhu,
 Where a bonnie flower peeps up, the green boughs
 through ;

How I love its hanging head,
 And its blush of pink or red—

It's the bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill that God loves too !

How I love "Glenbank," green and white* veined o'er !
 I could take its heathery hem to my wild heart's core !

How I love the big-brown eves,
 With their tittle-tat of leaves ;

But my bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill I love still more !

I'm but a country girl—neither rich nor fair ;
 And so, my love, I know 's neither here nor there ;

But, ah ! I've brothers twain,
 Of the minstrel heart and brain—

So, my bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill has right kind care !

A country maid am I—such a plain girl, too,
 That lovers came there never I could dare hope true !

So, amongst the flowers bright

Strayed my heart with red or white,

Till my bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill, 'twas bound by you !

But on Sunday evening last, while my twain and I,
 From the loving lovers' look on the clear, blue sky,

Turned to worship by the glen—

Ah, we ever worship when—

Its my bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill—your like shines by !

Oh, a-nie—a-nie ! I sighed—while we bowed all three--
 That this weary love of *love* in poor girls should be

Making hearts a world of ail,

And our cheeks so thin and pale,

That our bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill might weep as we !

Some may sink, yet some may see, by this dear, dear glen,
 These, my brothers, bow as now, noble, song-crowned men ;

* A Bleach-green.

But, their sister, where may she—
Long so weary!—hope to be
When our bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill shall flower again?
Bid them, then, O! sweetest thing, should they bend to see,
Here, as now, your spark of blush, thro' the dark, green tree,
Round my silent earthy eaves,
Nurse some holy hisp of leaves,
From my bonnie, bonnie Cranes-bill, to sigh o'er me!



DREAM OF A WANDERER.

I LOOKED upon the ocean,
And I looked upon the strand:
I looked upon the heavens
That o'erhung the stranger's land:
But the brilliant blue was wanting,
And the robe of many dyes,
That each sea-sprung vale displayeth
Where my native mountains rise.
And the waves, like warlike spirits,
In their darkly-glistening shrouds,
Rose and flung their silvery helmets
In the pathway of the clouds:
But the breeze of bracing freshness,
That my fevered frame did seek,
In an icy odour only,
Wantoned o'er my wasted cheek.
And I found me, as around me
Rung the elemental roar,
Heart stricken and forsaken,
On a sterile, stranger shore.

But a soothing angel hovered
By that darkly-writhing main,
And on dreamy pinions bore me
To my native isle again.

Oh, the sweetness and the brightness
Of her meadows and her rills,
And the rainbow tinge of beauty
That was sleeping on her hills,
As the rosy lip of morning,
In the ripeness of its sheen,
Burst and rolled a golden current
O'er the glistening glancing green ;
Where the little shamrock shaded
Stem and leaf from human sight,
Underneath the hoary crystal
Of a chastened Autumn night :
While the breezes wooed the daisies,
With a heaven in their tone ;
And the fountains on the mountains
All in ruddied silver shone.

How I leaped upon those mountains !
How I gazed upon that sky !
Till my very spirit revelled
Through a galaxy of joy :
But the beauteous vision's fading
To a scene of darker hue ;
And an ocean strand of strangers
Bursts again upon my view :
And the mountain billows marshalled
In their merry might advance :
How I trembled as they gambolled
In their fearful foamy dance !
What tears of burning bitterness !
What frenzied words I spoke !
My home—my home, ah heaven !
And thus weeping, I awoke.
But I found me, as around me
Waved the tawny Autumn's pride,
'Mid the pleasures, yea, the treasures
Of my native Lagan side !

DEVIS MOUNTAIN SIDE.

THE mountain side is green, Jane,
The heather's breath is sweet ;
The daisy's snowy sheen, Jane,
Is vieing with thy feet :
The ocean's deep and wide, Jane,
And false as deep may be ;
But there's on Devis side, Jane,
A holy home for thee.

The pouting smiles of Spring, Jane,
Have worn away the snows ;
The bee has waved its wing, Jane,
Across the budding rose :
And sure the violet blue, Jane,
Outshines the haughty wave ;
And Willie's heart is true, Jane—
Oh, what would Jenny have ?

The mountain lark has songs, Jane,
Far sweeter to the ear,
Than all the strangers' tongues, Jane,
The world could let you hear :
And He who nursed and taught, Jane
That feathered priest of dawn,
Will shield thee, if besought, Jane
For Willie, when he's gone !

Then mark this hazel-tree, Jane !
For e'er its fruit be grown,
I'll come from o'er the sea, Jane,
To tend my bird alone :
And let what will betide, Jane,
No more I'll cross the sea,
But Devis mountain side, Jane,
Our holy home shall be.





The Tablet of Shadows:

A PHANTASY.

OLD Earth, at heart, heaves with poetic fire
Which, wanting voice, bursts ever forth in flowers !
The giant cloud, that swims the summer heavens,
Is but a mighty instrument which, waked
By firey spirits of the air, peals through
This blue-roofed tabernacle of all time
Its passionate psalmody. The wind itself—
The ice-tongued Autumn blast—that slays young Scent
And Beauty in their flowery tents, and then
Flings down his fleece and pearls, to weave their shrouds,
Or rear their tombs, is, o'er his various toil,
But part of music's universal soul !
Yea, Nature's life, with all its mysticism,
Is but the trembling of diviner chords
Whose warm notes quicken, whensoe'er they will,
A subtler minstrelsy—the sound—the voice
Of an Almighty and Eternal strain !

Ah ! surely hence, the coldest crimson clod
In human breast hath some sweet chamber rich
In melody, did we but know the key
To its peculiar song ! But hence to dream
A coal from that high altar, where the seas
And sun and moon, and all the starry worlds
Do humbly minister, hath ever touched
These lips of mine. Ah, Emily ! howe'er
Such breadth of Heavenly favour might accord
With this ambitious heart, from Fancy's gifts

Hope ever turning towards the nothingness
Of my deserts, dissolves amid the void !

For thee, sweet girl, I've marked thee since we met
Some twenty moons ago, and know, full well,
For poor simplicity of speech, such high
And holy breadth of soul as thine would fain
Besplendour, like a Mordecai, the worst—
The veriest beggar at its gates !

For me,

Alas ! I know not what I am, save this :
A woman who hath seen the world, yet feels
Forbid, by some strange weakness, to prevent
A kindly ear's close hearkening at her heart,
Even when, in that frailest temple, all
Her hermit feelings give their wrath, or love,
Or idol-worship, utterance.

'Tis well !

I would not stay them, even if I could ;
I would not wear the love that could not look
Upon my weakness and live. Not love,
But selfishness, is that which picketh up,
At every door, Discretion's plumb and square,
And faints o'er all that fail their varying tests—
Which, like some frothy friends of genius, flows
And ebbs upon the public voice ; and gives
Its praise or censure, not because 'tis due,
But that it is the order of the hour

Then is't for this, or such, in frailer phrase,
Thou, friend of mine, say—She's a poetess !
A poetess !—Ah ! what a life's enclosed
In that short word ; yea, e'en as locked within
Some single seed may sleep a grove of pines !
Ay, from the sound a ghostly power leaps,
That whirls me through the years—a poetess !
Alas ! a hill-horn echo of the wind
Was I, an answer to the blast that pierced.
Wild in my joy, but wilder in my woe,
My veins seemed filled with lightning or with lead

That, molten, surged my spirit through and through,
Till all my heart was wrapped in writhing flame
Which yearned to live upon my lip—to waste
Itself in words. To waste ? ah, me !—a flame
That torture, toil, or tears—and I *have* wept
Such tears, sweet Emily, as leave hearts barren—
Such tears, as, like the Chemist's burning drug
Upon the loom's green unsunned fruit—sear up
Youth's roses, in an hour, till April cheeks,
Shrunken and shrivelled, seem the path of blasts
That give to eternal snows their whiteness !

But, like a generous creditor, Time wipes
Out all accounts ; and, though, as waters from
An iron source may stain their path, for leagues
Beyond their fount, such tears may fix the shade
Of grief upon our every mood, for years
Through which their cause itself may be forgot,
A day will come—even below—when hearts
That seek to shrine the spotlessness of youth
Shall also feel its joyousness.

Ah, me !

If, through such tears, the dross of hearts *might* pass
The mortal shrine of light immortal, tinged
With holier fires, needs little reck the withering
Of its flowers.

Oh ! if that light, in absence
Of the shrine *is* light—a light to wear
Its bloom of brightness, but when shrines and times
Are earthless, Lord, purify the light—yea,
E'en through tears—e'en as sorrow purifies !

Thou seek'st the story of my life ?—The book
In which 'tis writ is bound in adamant,
And sealed with many seals. But I shall while
An hour away, dear Emily, with what
May strike thee as a poet's tale—a dream,
Or phantasy. I know not what it should
Be named !

'Twas night. I through my lattice looked

Upon the distant city's glare, that seemed
A pyramid of hazy light, set in
The spacious dark, and wept to think what crime
Might, even at that hour, be stalking 'neath
The ebon cloak that girded lane and den—
What innocence and truth might still be caught
Away, from net and lure and worse, were man
As ripe to bless as blame.

Alas ! for youth

And innocence betrayed ! The weaker falls—
But never more may rise ; for though kind Heaven,
Forgives, and man with canting lips declares
The pardon—ah ! 'tis Heaven's pardon, ne'er
His own ; for, with the same kind breath that tells
Of God's forgiveness doth He spurn the poor
Repentant outcast from His gate. What then
Of sins, as red as scarlet, changing hue ?
Oh, what a pardon which declares—“ Ye may
Not come within my rest : I cannot touch
You, lest I be defiled !”—and so the dog
Unto his vomit *must* return. No place—
No peace ! The swine must keep him in the mire !

The swine ? Alas ! some weaker sister who,
From all her parents' Summer wealth of love,
Had rushed, with beauty on her brow, and truth
And hope within her heart, to win or wear
The withering Autumn of a ruffian's smile.
Alas ! and then to melt, as doth a streak
Of mist upon a morning hill, beneath
The fire of human scorn, which sneering saith
At each return to grace : “ Hey day ! who's this
We've got among the saints ?” She may not rise !
And not for that she'd stooped or fall'n, so much
As that she lacked the cunning to conceal
Her fall ; or haply scorned the wish to wear
A saintly gloss upon a sinner's brow ;
For, ah, poor frailty's foes—her first—her last
Are of the frail !

Oh, Error ! may thy bolts
Be vain as are the hopes that tell thee, thus
Thou may'st conceal thy kindredship with Crime !
If thou the hypocrite wouldest better play,
Go note the pure Christ-like forbearance marks
The truly pure, in highest, heavenliest form ;
Nor fear that, when thou weep'st, o'er erring dust,
One tear of thine shall ever spark or speck
In righteous eyes thy seeming white ; for, though
The weakly pure, like wandering, wavering fires,
May melt and mingle with the gloom they meet,
Fixed souls, like stars, draw only light from gloom,
And ne'er, oh, ne'er upon the milky way
Of that most holy Cherub, Charity,
Shall that fell foe, Hypocrisy, have power
To fix a spot, or stain may live beyond
The first night's dew that mingles with her tears !

I turned me from the sick'ning sights and thoughts ;
And, rushing from my chamber, sought to fling
My bosom on the breeze. Then, far o'er hills,
I ran a lonely track that opened on
A well-known vale, when all my spirit, like
A maiden sword, leaped fresh and radiant from
Its fleshly sheath, and, with a joyous ring,
The dim blue distance entered to the heart ;
While, lo ! that sun-robed shepherdess, the moon,
Far o'er the broad gray pastures of the night,
Led forth a golden flock of stars ; and, 'neath
A silent shower of ghostly silver, drowned
The huge-limbed shadows slumbering by the rocks,
Till rose the distant hills, through misty shrouds,
Like pardoned spirits from the night of tombs,
And, steeped in glory from a thousand worlds,
Stood forth meet altars to the god of silence.

Beneath my feet, a gauze of silver mist
Sheeted a lea in its deep greenness, rich
As some hill-girdled lake that, to its breast
Of dubious quiet, steals the tints around.

A pale-cheeked daisy, sadly, here and there,
 In wasted beauty bowed, while from its crown
 Of clustering stars a dewy diamond,
 Pure, fresh from night's dark mines, and shaped to light
 More chaste by some young artist-errant from
 The world of frosts, to Faith or Fancy cried :
 I am the symbol of a Voice that saith—
 Thus even so do ye—go lift and light
 The humbled brow—the wreck of Innocence !

I strained my vision to the outer edge
 Of that fair vale, whose moon-besplendoured grass
 Seemed silver tongues to creeping airs that streamed
 Strange anthems through my soul—anthsms that woke
 Wild, withering echoes there—echoes, alas !
 Of weepings and farewells.

I knew the scene—
 Each gloom and grace—the shadow wearing down
 The little slope ; the grey-faced lichens on
 The round bald stones ; the fleece-flake drifted from
 The scattered cloud of snowy, sleeping lambs ;
 The lonely, restless feather, newly shed,
 As Genius sheds her thoughts, unconsciously,
 Uncared for ; and the world-depicting furze
 That breeds a thousand thorns for every flower ;
 And here and there, the slim patrician broom
 Which, from the moanings of the night, did make
 Soft melody—its severed silken pods
 Chit-chattering, ay, like fairy castanets—
 I knew them all and loved them—loved them all
 The more for that, through Changes' long wild reign,
 They'd kept so much the same.

I saw amid
 The brawny-bosomed oaks that, on my left,
 Hemm'd half the living em'rald 'neath my feet,
 A fairy cot, which, as I gazed, waxed dim !
 A spirit passed and whispered in my ear,
 With hollow, husky laugh : Not there ! not there !
 My soul made answer : No ; ah, me ! not there !

Yet turning thither, I—like one who feels
Within his brain a fire to feed the hate
Of worlds, and in his heart a pang that says :
Let flame be met with flame ; and in his eyes,
A flood might quench the whole—dashed on, nor knew,
Nor cared I whither.

Ever, ever on,

I won a wall of beechen boughs, and, like
A shadow, pierced their mingled arms and heard
The leaflets, crisp with Autumn's frost and gold,
Crackle beneath the breezes toying touch,
And heard—oh, God of love and gentleness !
Caught, from an open lattice, on their flight
To thee—such sounds as with their sweetness, slew
The evil in my brow, and through the dead
Bethesda of my soul, an angel, each,
In healing tremour passed, till every dark
And palsied thought leaped from its depths, made white—
And pure and vigorous—all, sweet Lord, thine own !

As fuse the landscapes various hues and forms
To one dim mass, upon the traveller's eye,
While distance drops before, and leaps behind,
The belching steeds of steam, so e'en to me
Became that blessed vision ; till, when each
Vexed sense had failed to find the cause, the eye
Of Mind fell on the cottage, and behold !
Its glimmering white was vapoured with my tears !

Ay, I had wept !

A little while and, lo !

As through some distant, dingy wall of crags,
Riven and castellated by old Time,
A burning barque might shew the many tongues
Of dusky flame that, from the midnight sea,
Lap up the struggling blackness as she glides,
So, through a scattered cloud that slowly o'er
The heavens passed, like some huge, sable bird
Of moulted pinion, peered the wading moon,
Till all the hazy surface of the cot

Was streaked with fluttering orange, thread-like beams ;
And these, like souls of kindred lights and shades
And sympathies, that, in the bustling crowd,
Each other mark and clasp, with pant and strain,
To drown all dreams of separate self, and be,
As sadly-severed portions of a whole,
Eternally rejoined—one light—one gloom !
So these sweet shreds of spirit-loveliness,
Towards each other trembled, and became
One spot of pearly-brightness, like a star
O'er-traced with rainbow-coloured lines, and set
Within a square dark shield—all lattice-like—
Whence drank mine ear a voice, so sweet, so low,
It seemed the mere remembrance of a sound ;
Or if the immaterial could be drawn
And painted to the eye, then it had been
The portrait of a voice, stored up within—
An echo framed and fixed above that spot,
Where, 'neath the kingly purple of a heart
That knows to feel and love, the spirit kneels
To God, and to the memory of things,
More loved for being lost.

Thus ran the words :

“ Our Father, who art in the heavens, oh, make
My mother whole ! Her cheeks grow sear and thin,
As daisy-leaves on which November nights
Have fed. Oh, calm her heart and cool her brow,
And send once more to touch her sick white lips,
That angel whose bright finger used to stain
The roses of their health. Lord, heal her head !

But who am I, that I should say undo—
Undo, great Father, aught which Thou hast done ?
A child ! I know it, Lord—a little maid !
But she !—Oh, was she not both wise and good,
And more ? Her soul was great as it was pure—
So great, it seemed to reach the heavens, and talk
Amongst the stars ; and thence return with tales
And tidings of Thy power. Oh, Father ! Lord

Almighty, maker of more worlds above
Than there are living tongues below, lift up
That soul ! It lies height-hidden in those clouds
That bring the tears—like hill-pines far away,
Where heaven rains. She weeps—ever she weeps.
For me, her one—her lone half-gardened flower !
Why weeps she so ? Lest I should be more lone—
An orphan ! motherless ! Ah, God ! how much,
Indeed, then I should be alone ! Oh, hear
Me, Father ! cool my mother's brow !

Her thoughts

Were still of Thee, of Jesus, and of heaven,
Her home of homes ! Like some sweet little maid
Who, coy and timid, at a stranger school,
Amongst the many finds herself alone,
And sorrows for the hour when she shall meet
The faces that she knows and loves, 'tis so
For Thee she grieves, and grieves !

'Twas she that showed

Me how to read Thy name, and all the things—
The sweet and holy things Thou saidst and didst
For her—for me—for all the world contains ;
And I, because of what she showed, have loved
Thee all I could, and tried to love Thee more !

'Twas she that showed me how to seek and find
Thy presence, power, and beauty everywhere.

Oh, seeking thus, how oft alone we've sat,
Out where the sun, so broad, and round and bright—
As if the stars had all grown into one—
Stood naked on the hill : and looked across
The lake : and threw the little ripples' hoods
Like yellow silk : or crept away behind
The trees, and, Eve-like, hid and sewed, and sewed
As if with silver threads, and needles all
Of twinkling gold, the chesnut leaves of deep,
Deep, dewy green, into an apron round
His knees ; or at the bottom of the well,
Beneath the thorn—that white-crowned queen

Of all the scents—lit up another sky—down, down
So far !—I trembled while I looked, and thought
It like your own deep, dread, blue eye ; and when
The big black night came stealing o'er the fields,
To tread the whiteness from the air, and drown
The twilight fire-flakes on the window-pane,
She taught me of the Wisdom and the Love
That shaped the sun, that sowed the stars, and bade
Them spring and shoot, and burst in flashing bloom
Along the moon-ploughed ridges of the night :

Oh, God ! and shall we walk and talk no more ?
Sweet Saviour, touch and heal my mother's brow !
For me, my Maker, who am but a child,
Be Solomon's request—less wealth or power,
Than wisdom, and a love of Thee and Truth !”

She ceased, and for a moment I perceived
The slender little form, the thin white cheek,
With night-black trees bestrewn—the anxious eye,
Whose living gray was filled with trembling fire,
That heavenward sparkled ; but, as I beheld,
The moon stole into darkness for—a time !

ONCE more the mystic picture-book of life
Revealed its pages through the silvery haze !
The mighty angel, Change, had been at work,
And all I saw bore traces of his toil !

The light grew broader as I moved ; and I
Perceived two youthful forms who, 'neath a cloud
Of bronzed and silver leaves, sat searching each
The oft-searched heart of each, for fresher flowers
Of love, and deeper vows of constancy.
How well ! ah, Heaven ! how well I knew the twain !
The blue-eyed youth, still in his laughing days,
The dark-haired maid of barely nine-score moons—
The beauteous boy, who loved the world, and swore
Or would have sworn, to all it said ; because

He saw the thing was fair, and spoke to him
In accents sweet as song ; and for him formed
A faith, and saved the labour of his soul—
Who *should* have known a knowledge of our wants
Can make us fair ; and, that a flow'ry tongue
May flash through thorny lips ; the little maid
In beauty nowise rich ; white cheeks, and brow
Of angled marble, passionate lip and eye—
An eye whose far-down depths of ghostly gray,
And analysing light, and spirit dew,
That told of matter melting into mind,
Drank in and searched, and weighed and measured all
Within her mental range. “ All,” said I ? Ah !—
“ I love the beauty of the stars ;
It tells me of the peace beyond.”

Thus spoke

The maid, while he, brimful of playful words,
Sat gazing on the bright eyes by his side,
That fixedly skyward shone. And now his voice
With morsels of sweet sound bedropped her ear :

“ I would not love the moon as thou, for this—
Shé’s vain : a very Vashti in her pride,
That scorns to shine, save when her lord, the sun,
Is gone !”

“ The dear celestial Blue-beard—lord ?

Ah, yes !”—in play, returned the gentler voice ;
“ But, seest thou not, when kindly night withdraws
This haughty lord, and drops a curtain o’er
His golden gates, what have we then ? A tomb !
His very track a sepulchre hath been,
The fine ærial dusts of which arise—
Each atom—in a shining ghost that shows
His jealous heart, and falsehood of its loves !
Ah, pale-cheeked pilgrim of that silvery waste,
Thy truth, who doubts it ? Lo ! when archer Eve,
That page and pioneer of Night, a shower
Of gray-plumed arrows from his four-stringed bow
Upon the fiery jailor, winged thou through

The purple opening of thy dungeon door,
 That widened as thy lord waxed faint, beheld
 The broad West reddening round his couch of death,
 And didst in haste, and unrobed loveliness,
 Steal forth upon his burning brow to pour
 The cooling pallor of thy presence ; yea,
 That in thy crystal lamp thou mightst inurn
 Some passing radiance of his soul, to press
 Throughout thy long, lone night of gloom upon
 Thy widow's heart ; and feed the dream that aught
 So fair would not be wholly false—that aught
 So bright had never been, were not the hopes
 Of resurrection sure !

Fair mourner, thine
 Indeed is woman's heart, which if, as thou,
 It change, as say the crowd, doth only change
 As thou from pure to purer. Oh, sweet moon,
 Be blest for aye !"

" And thou, my fairest ! thou
 Her sweetest songster, whom we all may see
 Some day appointed lunar laureate ;
 Yea, pensioned by her ghostly majesty
 With some three hundred lovers' sighs per an.
 A coin of doubtful currency in worlds
 Substantial as our own. This, heaven forbid !
 I would not for an earthly realm, more vast
 Than that gray land of hers, behold thee sit
 Her nightly minstrel, though thy harp were loud
 Enough to split the poles !"

" With fustian like
 Our last ?"

" Ah, well, the counterfeit is king
 Below !"

" I know it ; but it shan't be so !
 There is a rhyme I gathered long ago :
 List here, and the true fate of Fustian know :
 My soul slept in her tent of breathing dust ;

On waking, in a still small voice she said,
 ' I saw the roused world on its Dagon tread,

Till fire-winged thoughts of the untimely gust
Issued, like spirits, through the iron crust
That darkling days had deftly o'er them spread ;
And scorched with breath and touch the golden thread,
Which marks the path these take, and that, those *must* !

I trod the cycles, led by Love and Awe,
And met the mighty Future face to face :
And tints of mind, long held as vain, I saw
On men and manners deepen into law—
I saw king Love lead caste and creed and race ;
And round the past a curtain closely draw !
“ ‘Tis fine, my minstrel ! But, king Love, when may
We dream he’ll come ?”

“ Thou may’st not *dream* ; but *seek*,
With open eyes, to what thou shouldst aspire !
Yea, piercing through the surface of all things,
Ne’er borrow aught o’er which inquiry *might*
Presume, if not to Faith acceptable !
Oh, thus, and only thus, conviction comes
In aught ! We must have *storms* to value calm !
And so the strong mind battles, tugs and strains
Against the strong, cloud-bearing winds of doubt,
That strong minds ever meet. Battered and tost,
Awhile—yea, hither, thither hurled—and yet,
To sterner strength, but strengthened by the worst,
It, in the end, doth ever rise and seek
God’s face, with that wild depth of love unfelt,
Unknown by him who loves—if such a love
As *his* deserve that sacred name ! he knows
Not what, and all for this : inquiry broke
The only bonds his slender faith imposed,
And spurning all control, rushed on—on—on !
Alas ! all blindly and alone !

Oh, this
Is that which maketh all the difference ’twixt
Our creeds in theory and in practice, too !
Our only *real* must be in *ourselves*,
Perceived and *felt* ! Our neighbour’s real is,

Without this feeling of our own, but our
Ideal. Hence, we can't regard the gem
Our neighbour holds beyond all price, with such
A deathly-grasping miser's care, as he
Who, having groped through grief and haze, did by
Its own sweet spirit, sparkles find and *feel* ;
And know it, where he sought, with cautious step
And slow, behind the ever-breadthening beams
Of faith. Thence, knowing what he hath, *sure, sure*,
Shall be his guardianship indeed ! Now, look
On him who, on a track unlighted, save
By flickering gleams from some tall wayside lamp,
By worldly wants erected in their pride
Of loneliness, and of something to be called
Exclusively their own, he finds thereon—
When dust-bestridden winds a gleam permit—
A trinket, sees—admires it *for its shape* !
Is *told* its light illumes the world. He looks
Around, perceives the world in somewhat like
Its usual light, and pensively returns
To what his seeking hath obtained. He sees
The carving—calls it good ; but, lo, the light,
Despite its praise, continues wondrous dim !
But shall he own purblindness to the crowd
Who laud its lustre—dwelling much upon
Some gleam perceived, but which, alas
For him, but seems to shine that it may show
The darkness of adjacent parts ! Howe'er,
He adds the volume of his voice to what
The crowd maintains—*supposes* that the light
Is grand and *clearly* seen, since all with whom
He walks declare it so. Thus, though he *sees*
Nor *feels*, he passes on, rejoicing in
The general haze, and in the pious hope
Of *lighting* in benighted souls, to share
True light with him ! Can such a man, for sake
Of what he hath, nor felt nor seen, be called
A true admirer of the thing extolled ?

Yet such as he would compass earth and heaven
To shift his neighbour's faith, and substitute—
Not that which is, to him, a *real*, but
The dim ideal of the crowd—for what ?
The triumph of the right ? the Maker's praise ?
The love of souls ? of adding lustre to
The thorns that blossom on the crown of Christ ?
Ah, no ! ah, no ! 'Tis merely for the pride—
The poor, poor pride and triumph of a sect !

Alas ! such trickery done in Heaven's name,
How merciful is Heaven o'erlooking all !

Then spake the youth : " Almost thou temptest me,
Beneath the surface of my father's faith
To search for something I might call my own ;
But that I fear to lose what little I
May have in search of this uncertain gain !
What I *believe* to me is real, how'e'er,
To thee, thou sayest, it may seem ideal !
What thou believest, if it have its root
Struck deeply through the faith that saves, is but,
At best, a milder reflex from the *one*
Grand real which our worldly wisdom thinks
A thing too vague and shadow-like for man's
Substantial reach, and solid power of search.

" Our only real," saith the Now, " must wait
The simple senses—all the rest's ideal ;
And that, but tinted copies of *my* real.
Of all beyond man's fleshly five-fold gate,
No fact is his that he may mete or rate,
Except by what I hear, and see, and feel—
Substantial and *abiding* for his weal.
Hence, heaven's but earth refined—its grander state
Still human—men, bright-robed, its angels ; cast
After some model in each dreamer's breast !
Yea, even his gods—for each soul seeks its *mate*,
And by his thoughts and actions daubed or dress'd !'
Abiding ? *Blindling*, what or whence art thou,
Who *changest* while we breathe thy name, the Now ?

Even so, my minstrel maid ! I own the truth
Of thy strange stave ; the wisdom of the Now
Hath been to me a sorry teacher. If
The present wear, in all its wealth of forms,
Such all substantial look and feel, and yet
Therewith such proof of *all's* decay I'm forced
To feel. The solid earth I've trod ; the trees
That laid their fruit upon my lips ; the grand
Old hills I've climbed upon my knees—all—all,
Howe'er substantial, 'neath my hand or foot—
Substantial is, or *solid* ; but to that
Solidity in me, which is to it
Akin. If this in me shall pass, so too
Shall *all* in that to my solidity,
So solid-seeming now. Therefore, I'm forced
To name the *Now* the *passing*, and its source
The grand eternal, the *only* permanent !
Oh ! hence, along those rugged ledges, where
Thy young thoughts stalk, thy fears, were I, as erst,
To venture much, were not, I grant thee now
Without a footing ! Yes, it easier is
To wander from yon moon, however faint
Her guiding light—which still is light from heaven—
Than to return and gaze upon her face,
With that wild depth of love you speak of, when
We've drowned her rays with other light—which light,
Howe'er so broad, may still be earth's ! This gem
Of mine may have its spots unpolished here
And there—its darker spots ; but still it hath
Enough of beauty to make manifest
Its claim to be a *gem without a price* !
And so, I'll wear it through the world with thee,
My bride, to give it form and colour now
And then, as we may deem it lack. But there
Is work to do—strong chains to break—the mass
To raise to human height—the bands to pull
From eyes, self-blinded 'gainst their owner's rights,
And thou, my love, hast many songs to learn,

And melodies to teach ; and though beside
Our home, upon the hill of Voiceways,
And 'neath the grove, where sways at morn and eve
The sable cloud of cawing throats, there may
Be much to grieve thy chastened ear, yet I
Shall still be there, and still be fond as thou.
And now, sweet girl, our farewell to the stars !”

“ Alas ! I've dreamt of grief ; and yet I know
Not wherefore grief should come. I do but seek
To teach the birds a gentler note—to weep—
To laugh—to sing with thee ; and if I may
Learn somewhat of thine own large heart, to steal
And sow my knowledge 'mongst the crowd—my soul
Upon my lip—my heart within my hand !

My mission's human ; but the work is God's !
And though it lead me through the frost and snow,
And through the ways of pinch and pain, shall I
Not feel the beatings of thy heart, and know
That thou art pleased, and Heaven's will is done !”

I saw their forms retire ; and, as I gazed,
The moon stole into darkness once again.

LOOKED upon a city, through the haze
Of moon-lit vapours ; and, behold I saw
An open lattice, and within a couch—
A lowly couch—whereon a strong man lay,
In battle with disease ; and by his side,
A wild-haired woman knelt, as if in prayer,
And ever looked she up and smote her palms ;
And sometimes 'rose, and, with a frantic air,
Did pace that cheerless chamber, talking much
Within her soul ; and still she pressed, and pressed
Beneath her breast, as if she strove to stay
Some fearful struggle there ; and still she swept,
With hurried reckless hand, the oozing flood
Of anguish from her brow and eyes ; and still

She paused a moment, looking up, then on
The thin-clothed pallet and the man ; and still
She murmured, in a strange, wild voice—“ Oh, God !
‘Tis I have made this bitter bed of death
And darkness to his soul. I sought to lead
Him unto Thee, through broader light—a light
Which might have led to that true eminence,
Whence purer eyes behold Thee, as thou art,
A God of MIND, and, if of myst’ry, Love
And Mercy infinite ; a God who may
Not be adored with mere lip plaudits. Oh,
Almighty Moulder of all minds ! shall we
To Thee mark out a lower grade of sense
Than what we human worms would claim ? Who’s he
That for the labour of his brain—the fruits
Of pen or pencil—stoops to feast his ear—
His honest pride in that high art he doth
Possess—with senseless ravings o’er the ‘ this ’
And ‘ that,’ which mean nought, nor exist throughout
His work of joy, though noted, blamed, or praised,
With much and most amusing critic care ?
Ah, no, great spirit ! nor to God, nor man,
Can praise be aught but empty, spring it not
From head and heart that know and feel ‘tis due !
The reverent silence of one man who *feels*,
Is worth whole thunder-bursts of soulless sound !

And so, I sought to lead him—yea, and might
Have even worked my wish to perfect shape
But for the hootings of yon crowd, who rave
Of what they know not ; and desire my life !
For what ? For that I have been kind, and fed
Them with the food of souls. How I have toiled,
Through days, and watched through bitter, bitter nights,
That ere the morning ray could smite my palm,
They might have feasted at my window sill.”

While thus she spake, a supplicating eye
She cast upon her lattice ; and her hand,
Imploringly, she stretched towards a cloud

Of cawing birds, that barred with sable wing
The passage of God's air. And still they came,
And cawed ; and 'mongst them were strange monstrous
shapes,

Compounded of both bird and beast, that smote
Conjecture mute, and Reason fears to name !
And mingled with their carrion notes, at times,
Were those that seemed to imitate the tongues
Of men, as if by higher intellect

They had been trained to utter certain words
Of coarse upbraiding—ribald jeers, and oft
Among the sounds there issued some that seemed
To run in measured rhymes, or phrases, thus :

“ Gizzard and gall,
Spirit and bone,
Give to us all,
Or give to us none—

Who gives us not all, gives none !”

Awhile she looked with bold, defiant front ;
Then wept, and stole on tip-toe past the couch,
And held her wasted fingers forth, till beak
And talon on her flesh grew foully red ;
While she, with martyr's firmness in her gaze,
But all the woman's heart upon her tongue,
Inquired, “ And was't for this—and only this—
Ye loved me from the first ? Ah, well ! ah, well !”
And still the mass of pinions grew more dense,
And sank, and swelled and swayed—
With hoot and scream—an ebon sea, and like
A very sea, in sound. And, lo ! while I
Beheld, and while the tremor of her lips—
So pale—so close compressed, as though she thus
Might veil the anguish in her severed flesh—
Declared her heart's convulsive throes, a strange
And owl-shaped bird, with bloated, human face,
And vulture beak and claws, made wild'ring noise
Of fiendish merriment ; and, through a tube
Of weird invention, planned to grasp the clouds,

And gorge its bulk with whatso' foulness they
 Had caught—did belch and pour a reeking flood,
 Of dingy flakes, upon her pallid brow
 And furrowed cheeks ; but ever through the mass
 Of clam'rous throats and soughing wings, there stole
 Some kindly ray of light, that shone upon
 The blackness till it passed. And still the bird,
 Or phantom—whatsoe'er it was—made scoff,
 With almost human voice, and chanted thus :

“ Carrion here, and carrion there !

Gorb !—Gorb !—Gorb !

Curses and carrion,

Clamour and buzz !

Freedom for claws,

And flesh for our maws ;

These are the laws

For huz—for huz !

Pinion and claw—pinion and claw !

Flap !—Flap !—Flap !

Pinion and claw—wheuraw !—wheuraw !

Tuwhit ! Tuwhee ! Tuwhit ! Tuwhee !

‘ Freedom for wings,

And the use of our stings !’

The young emmet sings,

And why not we ?

Hee, hee !—Hee, hee ! And why not we ?

Gizzard and gall—gizzard and gall !

Croak !—Croak !—Croak !

Gizzard and gall !

Who gives us not all

Gives nothing at all !

Body and soul !

Caw !—Caw !—Caw !

We must have the whole—

Wheuraw !—wheuraw !

Spirit and bone !

Hee, hee !—Hee, hee !

We'll have all, or have none—

Tuwhit! Tuwhee! Tuwhit! Tuwhee!

Tattered and pale—tattered and pale!—

Gorb!—Gorb!—Gorb!

Tattered and pale—tuwhit! Tuwhee!

We're grieved at her ail! Hee, hee! Hee, hee!

Bleeding and pale,

And thin as a curse!

Smoky and stale—

Will she never be worse?

Her maw is as empty as even her purse—

This queen of the roast—

This queen of the roast—

Tuwhit! Tuwhee! Tuwhit! Tuwhee!

This Liberty's nurse

Is liker her ghost."

Hee, hee! Hee, hee! Hee, hee! Hee, hee!

And still he bowed, and swayed that bloated face
Of pimpled purple o'er his blood-dropped breast;
And mocking salutations made; and closed
With "mighty nurse of Freedom, hail! All hail!"
While, weeping, she replied:

"Alas! Alas!

Ye know not what ye say, nor what ye seek;
Nor how ye tear the heart whose only aim
Was for your weal; nor how your sayings grieve
The better breasts amongst yourselves; nor how
They slay upon the threshold of advance
All visions, hopes, and e'en desires, to serve
With true effect your wants. For me, I did
But seek to shape a few wild thoughts or sighs
To simple melodies, in unison
With what my soul believed your needs required—
Ah! was it thus ye loved me from the first—
And was't for this, and this'—and here she stretched
Her bleeding hands—"your love at first was given?"

God grant me strength to bear, and to forbear,
So far as this most bitter fate requires !

Think ye, if I could change this shape that God
Hath given, and swim amongst the stars, as one
Of these, would greater power be mine to nurse
To living forms, the golden, dreamy shapes
That peopled my first visions of your rights
And wrongs—and, from my cradle, led me, like
A wounded bird, secluded from all life,
That I might dream my dream, and work its work ?
I've done : I'm bruised, but you're forgiven.—Go !”

Then lo ! the dying man upraised him on
His couch, and in a piercing voice rang out :
“ Hist—dearest—dearest, what am I ?—dost thou
Not know, I've shed my soul, like water, o'er
The thirsty crowd ; and for the people striv'n
And battled with that brawny, tinted lie
That kings our prostrate province ? Ha ! the world,
Itself, is all a lie ! a narrow, coarse,
Cold-blooded—worse—a most ungrateful lie !
Then bring the cup, the reaming cup, and fill
It to the brim, and drink it to the dregs ;
And we shall sing—ay, sing a parting stave
To this same Viper-World and Liberty !
Ay, Liberty ! ha, ha ! my precious gem—
My holy idol, Liberty ! ha, ha !
And that leagued lie !”

And then he waved
A hand of maniac force, as though it held
A wine-cup, round his swaying head, and brought
It 'neath his blood-shot eyes, that noted not ;
And chanted in a strong, fierce voice, this song :

“ Philosophy, up, with a hic—ic—up,
To chorus this stave of staves ;
If Liberty's god, in the land of Nod,
Is throned among heartless knaves ;

If Freedom and Truth were a dream of youth,
That with youth must pass away,
Let's wriggle and smile with fraud and guile,
And heartless be as they !
Thus, we'll laugh our laugh,
And we'll scoff our scoff,
And to king Deceit we'll bow—
If it isn't the way we used to do,
'Tis the way the world does now !

Yea, we'll laugh our laugh, and we'll scoff our scoff,
And, as round the chorus swells,
We shall drink to thee, Sincerity,
With thy thundering cap and bells !
And, while Conquest sleeps on the mangled heaps,
Where lately he smiled and quaffed—
Till again he starts from his pillow of hearts,
And howls for a deeper draught—
Sing : Justice and truth
Were a dream of youth,
So to king Deceit we'll bow—
If it isn't the way we ought to do,
'Tis the way we *must* do now!"

Ah ! how that wild-haired woman gasped, and pressed
Her side, and sought for soothing words, and strode
The chamber, with loud-smiting palms ; and then
Once more she knelt ; and, having prayed, looked up,
And caught a ray of calmer light from those
Death-stricken eyes. The man lay once again
Upon his couch, and spake in altered tone ;
And gazed upon the woman's face awhile,
With looks of mournful frenzy. Then he wept ;
And, through his tears, and through a little air,
Of most soul-smiting grief and sweetness, sang :

" Lowly one, holy one, come to me—come !
Here is a heart for thee, here is a home ;

Nearer me—nearer me—few be so fair !
With the moon on thy cheek—the long night in thy hair ;
And thy lips like the heart-stream of day in the west—
Queen of the Beautiful, come to my breast !

Oh, my soul shall go forth, with thy smile for her shield !
And the song of thy lip is the blade she shall wield ;
And the heavens she'll rifle, my fairest, for you,
While the young moon's asleep on her broad bed of blue ;
My own one, my lone one, my deeply distressed—
Queen of the Beautiful, come to my breast !

Away, by yon tall—by yon snowy-cloud towers—
My spirit shall cull thee the glowing star-flowers,
Whose young bloom I'll wreath o'er my holy one's brow,
Till more lovely she shines than she shines even now :
Ah, say not in tears, that my dearest looks best—
Queen of the Beautiful, come to my breast !

Oh, I'll sit by my bride, where the rushes are green,
While the sun weaveth gold o'er the robes of my queen ;
And I'll teach her young heart and her forehead of snow
The secret of frowns, till her faintest shall go,
Like a bolt, through the vulture that robs her of rest—
Queen of the Beautiful, come to my breast !

White was thy breast, as the surf on the shore,
When the beak of the night-bird was stained with its gore ;
And the rock of his reign !—is it rugged and high ?
Ah ! I'll show thee a path thou may'st clamber it by,
Till thy white feet grow red on the pride of his nest—
Queen of the Beautiful, come to my breast !

Oh, the world hath look'd dark on thee, light of my soul !
But He sits in the heavens its wrath can control ;
And the tears the world wringeth from Purity's eye
Are the pearls that can purchase a throne in the sky !
Queen of the Beautiful, deeply distressed,
Pray to thy Maker, and come to my breast !”

They both wept much till, in the end, he spake :
“ Thou much hast borne, and long, with me and mine—
My darker part, as 'twere. I've been a thing
Of tears and laughter—doubts, and hopes, and fears—
A world in miniature ! And thou hast toiled,
Or, like another David, at the feet
Of Saul, hast sat and hymn'd away the ill
That ate my heart ; and I have blamed and soothed—
And blamed again—not knowing what I blamed ;
For mine were weakly eyes, and slow to see !”

“ Now, Heaven bless my dearest !” whispered she,
“ Of all, I've seen, thou truly wast and art
The better—yea, and, for thy sake, much—much
Have I forgiven ; and, for thy sake—or God's—
Shall I forgive the rest ; and, in my heart
Of heart's most secret chamber, I shall hide
The hot, the unknown bitters of my life,
From every common palate ! Still, not thus,
'Tis wise to chase the darkening past—'tis gone !
But turn thee where the virgin future waits,
And, like a white-robed bride, already puts
Her finger on the latch that ope's to thee,
Her spouse. Let's seek The Life—The Way—and all
The rest is well !”

“ The LIFE !—The WAY !”—he spake :
“ I've been a colour student : much more apt
To grasp a thought, and hold it for its tint
Or tinsel, than to search or analyse
The often wrangling items of its whole.
And now, I feel an iron hand upon
My heart ; and whither with it am I bound ?
‘ Our heaven's but earth refined ; its pomp and state
Are human !’—knowest thou the rest ? Ah, well !
‘ Tis true ! What know we of the strange Beyond ?
I only know I am ; but—therefore, that
A greater *must* have been. Whence came yon oak,
Beneath whose seeded shade we sat so oft,

In yon bright days, far down among the years ?
 It rose from out an acorn ! True ; but whence
 Came acorns ? Did our earth first raise the seed,
 And then the tree ? Has she declined in power ?
 She yieldeth neither man nor acorn now,
 Without the parent man or oak. 'Tis strange !
 Or did she raise the tree, and then the seed ?
 If so, why not so still—or wherefore seed
 In aught—if aught may spring without ?

A string
 Of childish queries, these ; but solve them, sage,
 Who may ! Again, this wizard earth produced
 A pair of each ; then, somehow, lost the power
 To yield again in *pairs* ; or else gave up,
 Most knowingly, the work to what she did
 Produce ! Then stands it thus :

This brainless earth,

With most Almighty wisdom, did conceive
 And execute a plan, whereby her parts—
 Or certain portions—might arise and take
 To certain forms, with marvellous cunning wrought,
 To glorious beauty, filled with glorious mind ;
 And then produce and reproduce their like,
 Throughout all time, without the need to tax
 Her first conceiving power again. It was
 A vast idea ! but it seems, to me,
 That this, evolving free-will acts, involves
 Some thought ; but whose ? Not that of the produced !
 And if not—and if so—there's myst'ry, much
 The same ! Ah, me ! Before our eyes are facts
 Than which the darkest sayings in the *Word*
Revealed are easier to solve. Yea, turn
 We where we may there scowlleth mystery ;
 And, if so, wherefore turn from that which can,
 At best or worst, a myst'ry only be ?

There's night on every side ! Oh, let me look
 On that—on that alone which holdeth light,

However ill-defined ; my spirit yearns
For light !

There was a song I loved in days
Gone by. It spoke of human lore, and said
The thing was foolishness when brought to aid
Our wanderings through the infinite."

Then she,
With uplift streaming eyes, and fingers locked,
Upon her knees, made gentle music with
Her lips, in trembling forth her gratitude
To Him whose beck can still all storms. And then
She wiped his brow, and kissed his lips, and spake :

" Three Spirits infinite before me shone—
The three dread mysteries of all time and place :
Their names were Power, Eternity, and Space ;
Each flowed from each, while into one they ran—
Or so said Reason, though her lips flashed wan,
At their own whisper—then, with earth-low face :
' Seek not,' she sighed, ' their dazzling depths to trace ;
'Tis not for Lore, within Time's shifting span,
To glass a fixed immeasurable, or mete
The boundless by a line of years. Vain lore !
Shall puny pools, wherein thou lavest thy feet,
Compare with waters ne'er may know a shore ?
An ocean-drop may savour of the sea,
But bears no sign of its immensity !'"

" No," said the man ; and raised his eyes, of glazed
And blood-shot blue, to heaven, with calmer glance,
" We have no measure for the infinite !
I balance tiptoe on the hair-breadth bridge
Where separates this little island—Time,
From that vast continent, Eternity ;
And see the latter, e'en as saith thy song,
Made up of seconds, as the sea of drops ;
But all unmeasured by night's sable wand,

It stands, indeed, one great eternal ‘Now !’

Come, blessed dreamer, once again, and charm
Me with thy dreams ; nor heed the world which saith
‘Tush !—carried off by dreams !’ Yea, be it dreams ;
For me they’ve carried nearer God !”

She spake :

“ I knelt me on that gold and purple strand,
Where thought-waves wrestle—’twas the land of
dreams—

And at the fountain of its thousand streams,
I, bowing on the star-besprinkled sand,
To Heaven murmured, with uplifted hand :
Lord, is it light that shows not whence it beams ?
Lord, is it clear where endless mystery teems ?
Ah, why so stumble where we yearn to stand ?
‘ Hold !’—said a whisper, smiting like a sword—
‘ The earth’s one breathing beauty, sea and shore !
Worship’s the child of Wonder !—and the Lord
Saith, ‘ Look—enjoy—then wonder and adore !’
For e’en towards Him, as to thy kind, ’twill hold,
When wonder waneth, worship waxeth cold ! ”

Then I beheld the sick man on his couch
Become more troubled, while the woman strove
To rein or check his wild returning fit.
But, ’mid that deep, deep love of hers, which turned
The soothing trifles of her tongue into
Most regal converse, he arose, and stood
With iron limb upon the coverlet ;
And told the faded figures on the walls
And on the tattered drap’ry o’er his head
How he was there—one of themselves—to raise
Them to the measure of their human height ;
And having mouthed strange incoherencies
Awhile, again sank down exhausted. Then
Began a bitter wail against the world ;
And said, the veriest cur had but to see
The kingly lion eat and drink and sleep,

Or yawn and lash his sides, and look abroad,
To deem himself the kinglier of the twain.
And that should even God, as said her song,
Descend to common speech, with common man,
The creature would go *god* it on his own
Account ; and of the great Creator make
His jest. And still the woman soothed and soothed,
And then his reason came again ; and he
Did weep, and murmur how he loved the world
And every creature that had life ; and then
He upward looked, and grasped his brow, and said,
From out the holy gifts of thought and speech
His soul had formed an idol, and had placed
The damning thing between her Maker's face
And hers ; and then knelt down and worshipped, not
The giver but the gift, till he had grown
A god—the greater—to himself. And then
He groaned and wept ; and talked of suffering man,
Of caste and creed, and of the knaves who use
Religion as a statesman's staff of rule !
And of the worse, who take another side,
And seize on every step in state reforms
To plant within the bosom of Distress
Some errant fancy, having "Credo" stamped
Upon its tinselled front ; and then to goad
And persecute to death, and e'en beyond,
Whoever dared to cast inquiring glance
Upon th' *lauded fraud*—a fraud to dwarf
His soul, and slay its human sympathies.

Then she :

" We, in our soul's requirements, are
As oft unlike as in our forms and heights.
And hence, when two or more, whose wants are one,
Assume a name which gives their meaning shape,
And stand aloof, in what to them may be
A righteous joy, from our peculiar views,
Methinks it worketh little good to brand

Their meaning with the hot extent of our Interpretation. Meet such ills with love And Christian kindness on thy lips ; and let Them have the gentler form of our rebuke ; Remembering much may be in thine own views, That seemeth not so white to other eyes ; And that thou, too, hast flesh to bleed, when prick'd ; Rememb'ring, too, that what may seem a fraud To thee or me, may haply shine more bright To other eyes than doth the morning beam Upon the wavelet's brow ! 'Tis not in man To wear a fraud on his belief when once He *feels* it to be such ! The wretch who, 'neath An Eastern idol's chariot wheel, doth spill His life, performs a grateful act—if not To us, or to the God *we* serve, to those Within whose light he lives ; and to himself, And to the deity his own wild views Of perfect moral beauty hath upraised. And howsoe'er we mourn the slender ray That lighteth such, were broader come and gone, There still, to some, may seem a something left Unlit : for, till all human eyes are one In hue and strength of ray, this man will see Most differently from that. Let's, therefore, take The good and evil as they stand, or seem— Let each win all he may, in love, to what He deems is right ; but blame not those who think His right a wrong, and walk with hope and joy The haply darker way that pleases them."

He said :—

" I like the form thy truth assumes, For that it hath a gentler beauty than My own ; and but for this, the twain were one. Still, should Inquiry, quick and earnest in Her work with facts, be drawn aside to have Her fingers oiled ? 'Twere waste of time ! Besides,

What might not 'scape such slippery grasp ? I speak
Of what I've seen ; and if my truth hath got
No silvery notes—it is not *she* that speaks :
It is the facts themselves that, through her, find
An utterance of their state. The voice of truth
Is but an echo of the silent tongue !

I speak of what I've seen ; and much I've seen,
Amongst Religion's wares, that little speaks
To prove the holiness of her descent !

How much of earth ! How, much of Self, betipped
With Christly tinsel ! Ay, too much performed
For man's esteem—too little for the Lord's :
Behold our much be-lauded brother—Sleek,
Who, having played the household scourge, glides forth
And smites his breast—a city saint ; and breaks
His smallest silver coin to smaller still,
And, with a juggler's finger, slips the last,
As though it were the larger, to be laid
Within the treasury of the Lord ! Alas !
He hath deceived the eye that taketh note,
On earth, of God's receipts ; and he hath kept
His place with those that give ; but hath his Lord
Not seen the fraud ? *His Lord !—his God !—Or, see*
Our maiden aunt, the great Miss Meekly Sham,
Who stalks the temple-porch, on holy days,
A parchment trump of sounding sighs ; and flings,
Before th' applauding saints the ringing purse
For public wants, she filled by private frauds—
By frauds too base, to grant them other name !
Yet, who so high among the saints as she ?
And while, throughout the watches of the night
She tells her hoarded gold, lo ! simple Faith,
On some high, heavenly mission bent, perceives
Her midnight lamp, and weeps in very joy,
And saith—‘ God give thee rest, thou saintly one—
Thou Christian woman, for thy prayers ; for they,
With all thou hast, are given for the poor !’

Alas, alas ! we may begin, but where

Might end we, over this dark catalogue
 Of Christian cozenage ? Can I make these
 My model good ? And if I turn me, where
 The warring creeds shoot forth their blood-stained hands,
 And preach in painted trope and brimstone phrase
 Of " God-like charity"—charity !—Ah !
 These model goods and saints and charities—
 These bitter enmities of sect with sect
 Have slain more souls than grossest unbeliefs !"

" But wherefore turn, or here or there," she asked,
 " To seek our model good or ill ? We hold
 Our models in our souls, as witness bear
 Thy words, which note the ill. The opposite
 To that thou deem'st amiss must be thy good :
 Embrace it, or thou, too, art wrong. This, more ;
 If he who recks not Heaven's smile or frown,
 As little valued man's esteem, the thing
 That sits a private scourge, and blights his own
 His household flowers, might else have stalked abroad,
 A shameless, public curse, in all the forms—
 The withering forms—a shame-defying front
 May wear ! Again—from even him who'd guile
 His God, in giving whatsoe'er he gives,
 From whatsoever cause, poor virtue gains.
 Oh ! let us, then, accept the weal, and bless
 The name of Him who, in the heart of vice—
 Of even vice—can nurse some motive, fair
 Or foul—'tis not for us too nicely here
 To seek—to prompt a public good.

The thought

That delves the deepest gulf 'twixt us and truth,
 Is this—that blossoms, from the tree of love,
 Should ever grow to hate ; but human wasps
 May poison e'en God's sweets ! Full well I know
 How very hard it is to grope, from pool
 To pool, along the dreary coast of Doubt,

d watch the warring waves of sect with sect,
mongst the sliding sands and varnished rocks,
d know wherein to plunge and find one pearl—
here *one* is all we seek, or may be found !
t, know we not, the waters' conflict keeps
e waters pure ? Nay, more ; from out their depths
y force to light the hidden wealth we seek !
en, be it ours to watch with eager eye,
d, while they strive, lay hold on that which seems
e larger love for God and man ; for though
r creeds be oft but creatures of our own,
e are, for aye, the creatures of our creeds !
d still the fruit declares the tree ; and man
veals the secret feelings of his heart
r man—the measure of his inward good
bad—for giving or less-loving soul—
hen once he shows the tints through which his own
ief perceives and glorifies a god !
en, even thus, the different sects, 'tis fair
mete by reed of common measurement :
his, which you believe to be the life
souls, shine forth as love 'twixt man and man,
take the thing as God's ; but if it raise,
its desire, thine arm in wrath against
ellow-worm—I care not for the cant
“love” upon its lips—its work is death !
first—its last—its fount or river can't
God, for God is love !—and love's the aim
all His works ; and, save for deadly sin,
penitent, is never wrath or hate !

And then the white-browed speaker paused, and kissed,
d kissed the anguish from his brow ; and said,
e world would yet be well ; and bade him list :

see the future, said my soul, who sat
Catching the shadows of the coming years ;
‘ I see the future, and the world appears

Eternity's betrothed, all glory-fraught,
 And steeped in rosy youth, as though 'twere hot
 From His warm hand who lights the living spheres.
 I see fair temples, and religion wears
 That Bethlehem robe men deemed too meanly wrought :
 Of all world-worship, trickery and fraud,
 Stripped by the Christly noon-light of all lands,
 No more she hears the murmur—' Ah, sweet God !'
 Give poor Inquiry light to lift his hands'—
 I see her seal on every living brow—
 Men say, ' Let's worship God !'—none asks them ' How ? ' "

A streak of soul-shine played about his eyes,
 Which beamed with love upon the speaker's face ;
 And then, he said—" Bring forth THE Book, and let
 Us read!"

She rose like one who saw the soul
 Of some beloved weave flowers of glory from
 The flames God's wrath had kindled round its head ;
 And having tinkled gently on a bell,
 And breathed a sentence in the ear of one
 Who waited, brought and ope'd the book, and read
 In Jeremiah, chapter thirty-one,
 And stanza thirty-four. And while she read,
 Behold ! a meek-browed man, in pastor's garb,
 Made cautious entrance at the door, and sat
 Him down in silent hearkening ; while her eyes,
 A moment lifted, glanced the stranger thanks,
 And signall'd silence for a time. Meanwhile
 She read, till thus the sick man said :

" Now, love,
 Enough ! Thou know'st the little prayer that sprang
 From out that winter-illness, when the Lord
 Was wroth with thee for wickedness of mine.
 Thou know'st and wilt repeat it ! Wilt thou not ? "

She turned her to the window sill, and thence
Caught up a little book of pencill'd verse,
And having turned its pages, stayed and read :

“ Lord, hear me when I pray—
In mercy hear and come !
I'm worn and weary with the way—
I'm only bruised by length of day,
And fain would turn me home.

Of wayward mind and mood
I've been too much—too long !
Yet less, perhaps, from hate of good,
Than ills that spring from ebb and flood,
Of reason not o'er strong.

To say, I've trifled with Thy Word
Would not be what I've done ;
I nursed, no doubt, because 'twas dark,
Or made me seem a mind of mark ;
I sought for truth alone.

But if, by day or night—
When wandering far and near—
I sometimes met a spark of white,
That, now and then, resembled light,
It showed me little clear !

Lord ! I have craved for light,
As but the blind can crave ;
Besought my Maker, morn and night,
For strength of mind to know the right ;
Of will, its way to brave.

Oh if in *my* brief day
That truer light was dim—
If while I sought the ‘ Life’—the ‘ Way,’
My anxious foot hath stepp'd astray,
Say, was this false to Him ?

I know not that my sores
Were bared to weaker eyes ;
For, seeking through the Shiloh-stores,
My soul's misfootings, if in scores,
Were meant but for the wise !

Whose stars, when brightest out,
Appeared so dim and small ;
“ Lord,” I have groaned—and groped about—
“ The clearest faith hath dots of doubt,
Where thought exists at all ! ”

Oh, give me strength to rest
On thine accepted Word !
Or feed what else, within this breast,
My light would shew the meeter guest,
For nature's mighty Lord.

And, while the Salem-scroll
I yearning seek to scan—
Oh, if I cannot grasp the whole,
Lord, thou'lt forgive the erring soul,
That clings to all it can !

And bids the truth and right,
Whose roots are in my brain,
In absence of the rounder light—
The fuller orb that knows no night—
A light to me remain !

Then though a clod of dust,
Befoul'd with doubts and fears,
Look darkly where the learned and just
Have knelt, and reared their hope and trust,
For near two thousand years—

Thou'l hear me when I pray—
In mercy hear and come,

To guide the steps and light the way
 Of her who feels she's long astray,
 And fain would turn her home ! ”

Oh, how that hungry ear of ail drank up
 The voicing, till it ceased ; and then with palms
 Close finger-locked upon his eyes, the man
 Lay musing for a time. At length he spake :

“ ‘Tis well, but not enough ! I would be much
 More near my God than this.”

The woman 'rose
 And, weeping, said : “ There is a friend—a friend
 To heav'n and us, who yearns to press thy hand—
 May I produce him ? ”

“ Do ! A friend in such
 An hour as this is like a flow'ret, sprung
 From ice.”

And so, the man of God stood forth,
 A Christian salutation on his lips,
 A rooted peace within his eyes, yet on
 His cheeks hot tears ! He pressed a hand of each,
 And sat him down beside the sufferer ; where
 He talked of mediating Love, and long
 Of man's insane delay to choose, at once
 'Twixt life and death ; of our presuming on
 The little spark of mind that had been giv'n
 To search the earth ; but not to scale the heavens,
 Nor yet to know the earth, beyond our souls'
 And bodies' wants ; for howsoe'er we search,
 We start as children, and we end the same—
 If not the same—as worse ! An infant looks
 Upon a flower, and speaks—and we are dumb !
 Should, therefore, we, who know not common things
 Below, aspire to parcel out and sift
 The heavens ? Thus talked He with them, till at length
 The sick spread out the blot-sheet of his soul ;

And through the Pastor's fingers on his brow,
And through his tears, looked up and smiled, and caught
The good man's hand and pressed it to his lips,
And whispered Names that spoke, at least, of peace !
A little while of all-surpassing calm,
And, lo ! the Pastor motioned, and the sick,
In seeming peace and joy, received the Bread
That giveth life to souls !

Once more, a while—

A little while of slight unrest, and then
Once more a while, a little while of peace—
Of peace exceeding—then I heard what seemed
A stifled shriek, and, when I looked, behold !
A death's face lay upon the couch—nay, two !
For she, the woman, with her hand beneath
Her breast, lay breathless as a stone. But while
I gazed—and sought to know the worst—the best—
The moon stole into darkness, as before !

Once more the silver lightship of the heavens,
From out the covert of a rocky cloud,
Stole o'er th' unripped gray ; and I beheld
A thin-robed woman, 'neath the freezing stars,
Kneel by a new-made grave. Her words were low,
And sometimes strangled on her lips, by that
Wild music of the nerves, when icy cold
Eats inward towards the heart. Her feet were bare,
Her head uncovered, and her black hair swam
Upon her shoulders, like a wreath of mist
On some strange statue representing grief
Incurable. A little while, and then
She rose, and, with a maniac movement, went
And came between the grave and where a church—
A little, snowy, village church—stood like
A prophet beck'ning on the stars. There made
She sudden pause ; and, with her face thrown up,
Looked like a frozen pillar while she spake :

"A few moons since I, in a vision, saw
King Wrong throned on the mists of nations' tears,
And regally, on deep-mouthing errors, borne
Across the reeling world. I looked, and lo !
His will was wingèd power. I saw it grasp
Earth's universal thought, and with the mass
Of that strange, proud, and wayward thing unite,
While o'er the broad and many-peopled way
I saw him sift the crowd ; and, as the winds
Of autumn earthward smite the bough, whose fruit
Is goodliest, so did he smite brave men
Of iron thought and golden eloquence
From 'midst th' uncultured brows they toiled, to till
And plant with God-like schemes ; till, hopeless, 'neath
The hissing serpents of unwitting scorn,
Each faithful tribune bowed and passed. And still
Adown the crowded, clouded courts and lanes—
Those putrid arteries of cities' hearts,
Where human maggots battle with the bane
Of being, oft where high-souled suffering cow'r's,
Behind the dark of fate—I saw him track
The beauteous feet of some sweet spirit who
Essayed to bind the wounded soul with shreds
Of brighter hopes and memories. And while
The sweet one's heart throbbed quickest in its work
Of love, he so impeached her whitest thought
And word and deed, with guile and foul intent,
That up arose the thoughtless, heartless herd ;
And when the gentle thing they'd hounded o'er
The wastes of life, I heard the self-same howl
That taught her thus, with doubt and tears, to eye
The crowd, break forth in deepest blame against
Her loveless and unsocial nature ! Yea,
I saw him in the court—the camp—the field—
Beneath the dazzling domes of peers, and by
The cold quenched hearths of shivering serfs, a king
For aye—a conqueror in all ! I saw
Him steep whole realms in blood, to please the whim

Of some poor idiot, slave-made potentate !
I saw him mask in heavenly love, and sheathe
His poison-crusted form in snowiest robe,
Hot from the quivering corpse of strangled truth.
High in the highest seats of temporal power
I saw him fix the dread Almighty's name
To forgeries foul, as was his own sad heart !
I saw him range and reign, and still lay waste—
Make desolate—till all uprightness, truth,
And beauty, and confiding love—yea, all
Hope sets apart for heaven, before him blanched
And shrank, his heel-print in their souls burned black
As night ! While men—self-seeking creatures—bowed
And murmured—“ It is God ! ”

I wept !

Up rose

The ghastly wild-voiced Past, and from her throne
Of worlds exploded rent the veil of days !
The echoes of his voice were there ; and through
The phantom orbs, and down the long dark aisles
Of never-noted time they, peal on peal,
Rolled backward, deepening as they rolled, till they,
With one wild burst of sound, as though it were
The breaking of some planet's heart, dissolved
In that dread sea whose billows are the years !

I searched the law of things, and lo ! 'twas writ
That thus as Wrong from man's first days had been,
So should and would he be, and reign, lay waste
And desolate till all his presence know,
Whate'er his form or guise, till even babes,
Made mighty on the milk of hearts renewed,
Shall know, though in an angel's robe, and slay
The Waster even upon the judgment seat,
Or when his hands had caught the altar's horns !
‘ Ah, me—ah, me ! ’ I cried ; oh, Light of worlds !
How long must be the people's night ? How long
Must Truth seem foul and Falsehood fair ?—must Love

Be dumb, and Hate have voice in human hearts,
Ere perfect Beauty moon our mental haze !'

She ceased, and sat her on the grave and swathed
Her naked feet within the tattered folds
Of that thin robe ; and while she sat I mused
On where or how this all might end. But while
I sought and sought, and saw no key wherewith
To close decision, lo ! my spirit looked
Within herself, or in the dreamier depths
Of mental space, by Memory's starry feet
Less trodden than the rest, and saw, as 'twere,
Ten thousand points that seemed like pictured tombs,
Which yawned, and yielded up a wizard crowd
Of pallid atoms—hieroglyphics strange,
That held a meaning to the eye beyond
The power of words to say, of past events,
Grim facts that took to forms indefinite,
With moving power, and mingling, swirled and swam,
Till Fancy's dusk, infinity of fields,
Was filled with subtle life, with floating shapes
Of griefs and glooms ; of days and hours, and thoughts
And deeds whose first and last were tears, but whose
I knew not. While my silent spirit pored
Upon those pale impalpables that round
Her whirled like atoms in the moated beam,
A splendour sudden, soft, and shadowy
Arose and sprinkled all that dreamy world
With hazy sparks, whose tender rays stole through
My soul, rekindling embers of deep joys
That long had smouldered low ; and waking up
From death-like apathy, emotions such
As spring from soothing words and kindly deeds,
That come through all their heavenly white unstained
By any hope of recompense. I gazed,
And marvelled wheth'r I slept, or why, or how
So more than strange a fancy came, when up
From every shining point and every shape

Of gloom throughout that dense, disordered crowd
Of most fantastic phantasms, a vapour—
Small, thin, ethereal—'rose and eddied forth
In currents swift towards a point beneath
My eye, where each in its peculiar light
Or shade poured down—condensing as it poured ;
While still the currents came and poured, and sat,
And grew a breathing form of human mould !

No trait of aught like terror urged or stayed
My full heart's heave and fall. I reasoned what
The thing might mean ; but that was Fancy's hour,
And Reason held her peace. Each feature seemed
A something I had seen, though as a whole
The visage was unknown. In outline stern—
In all too bold, 'twas still a female face,
And deeply hewn in lines that told of tears
Much more than smiles, while in the eye there shone
No baby-lustre, but a light that looked
As fit to clear comparisons of things
Observed as hazes intellectual—
A ray to run a link of light between
The tombs of Truth and Fiction, and events
Beneath the keys of centuries to come.

I know not that the white-cheeked woman on
The grave beheld the phantasm at her side.
She took no note, but sat, her fingers linked,
Her open palms spread downward o'er her knees,
Her tall brow leant against th' ungraven stone.
She sighed at times a bitter sigh, and spake
In plaintive whispers thus :

“ Alas, alas !

The fault—the grievous fault—is all my own !
Ah ! wherefore am I here ? My feet—were they
Too foul to step within the kindly door
Of Death that had half-opened to my hand ?
My life hath been like some wild dream that throws

The real and th' ideal aimless—all
Confused together. Still the fault was mine !
How far—how very far—I fled astray
When she who loved me best was gathered from
My eyes ! Alas ! this thirst for fresh, for strange,
And oft forbidden springs hath been my—nay,
I shall not say the worst ! That foolish dream
That human skill from out the darkest flowers—
The deadly-nightshade of the moral world—
Might sweets distil to serve some spirit's wants,
And guide the process by *earth's* lore alone—
'Twas this and that wild wish that ever spurr'd
My brain to know the Unknown, with some desire,
Methinks, to win me smiles of sympathy
From any source—for ah, the world had few
For me !—'twas this, or these, that made me all
Too meet a creature for their lures. And so
They won my wayward childhood to their haunts,
And seemed to think the shadow of their wings
Upon my brow had made *my* nature *theirs* !
But she who passed, in her brief watch o'er me,
Had with a gardening hand of blessed love
Essay'd to lop and train my sapling soul
To strike no downward growth, but, poplar-like,
Shoot upwards ! Thus a child of early pray'r
Was I ; and childhood's pray'rs, or those that flow
From *any* heart sincere, are like to bread
Upon the waters cast, when we, mayhap,
Have ceased to pray—to e'en remember that
We *ever* pray'd—our God doth not forget
The good that was, and after many days,
Behold, our bread returns with usury !
And so we're saved from sin—from suff'ring—yea,
From whatso' *is*, for sake of what hath *been* !
Thus, were my limbs made strong to turn and flee
From all the lures of Voiceways, and bear
Within my soul a knowledge of its wants.
And thus my dream, that I might be—to those

Who, dwelling in a land of marvels much
Oppressed, did differ much from me in all
As well as form—a simplifying power
To shape material to the moment's wants.
I sought not to create or give them food
Unmeet for earthly eye, but to reduce
Th' unseen, unknown, that all might see and know—
E'en as among the walks of common men
With common sense some great-soul'd lyric-bard
Doth, with a strong, all-analyzing mind,
Dissolve some giant tome of ponderous thought
Till all the grosser parts have flown, and left
A simple essence, meet for meanest sense—
So did I deem that I, a meaner mind,
Might for a meaner still have simplified,
And made th' unknown a knowledge—yea, a worth !
Thus dreamt I when *he* came—e'en he who there
Hath cast his darker covering, and hath giv'n
This earth beneath my feet its own—and won
My heart and hand to follow where he led.
I passed their ways again. They'd woo'd my stay.
We passed amongst them—he and I—and dreamt
To nurse their beastly instincts into growths
More noble ; but their instincts rose and spurned
Our milder means, while all their passions rude
Grew clam'rous for the beastlier food they loved—
The food, *we* knew, was death, and so withheld.
And so they tare our flesh, and e'en to death
Did persecute. We saw too late wherein
We'd walked astray. We saw and felt—we *felt*!
Ah, who may utter what we felt, how much,
How deeply, or how long ! But thus they slew
The simplifying power that sought, alone,
To ope', to melt its heart, that thirsty lips
Might drink and go in peace. Well, God is good !
And had we not walked thus, and borne, what tongue
May say where else we might have walked, what else
We might have borne ? The facts that rise and pass,

Like preaching spirits, on my mem'ry's ear
Are pregnant with sage lessons. God is good !"

And so she ceased, while forward to her ear
The Vision drew, and spake, while she who sat
Seemed but to hearken to her own low tones :

" All things are needful, not excepting Wrong,
And all in their first parts are good ! 'Tis but
As men arrange, amalgamate, apply
The various items of the general mass.
Of acts, of facts, of thoughts, and what they yield,
That makes a superfluity or ill
Appear in aught. Thus Vice itself may be
But Virtue over-dressed, and foulest Wrong
But purest Right too often multiplied
Upon itself ; and though its fruits be tears
And groans that shatter hearts, and dynasties
Uproot—yea, deeds which, as the cloud-born reaps
With wing of flame the prairies of the West,
This earth most gorgeously may desolate,
Yet must the ill exist while mind remains
So feeble, and in views so circumscribed,
And where each moment may produce an act
That may be parent to a thousand more
Within an hour, of which the puniest may
Have might enough to shape the fate of years,
And act and hour be trusted to a fool ;
Hence, then, the only cause for marvel is
That Ruin's incomplete. Hence seest thou that
A Providence which for its deeds to Time
Alone accounting, howsoe'er it seem
To toy and trifle with men's ills and weals,
Takes up, with kind and cautious hand, the thread—
The motley thread of earth's events when lost
To human vision, else of such wild woof
Man's random, ever-tangling hand had wove
A robe of dread confusion to the whole !

Hence Tribune's tongues, in native jewellery,
Albeit rich as are the ruddiest veins
Whence through the groaning heart of mother Earth
The golden bane of souls and States is quaffed,
May for a time be stricken mute, or scorned,
And this but for the good of each and all—
The good, mayhap, of him who suffers first !
An endless path of peace and hope not yet
Were that whereon each soul might best fulfil
Its end. Who knows but pleasure rarely knows
His power. The never-needed's never known !
Hence souls that through their sensual blisses seem,
Like Lazarus in the sun, diseased and foul,
In native poverty, grief-surged may, like
The uproused waves, heave from their hidden depths
A wealth of gems, each worth a Sultan's throne !
Yea, many blessed to bless their race had passed,
Dissolved in their own unexpanded light,
Had Heaven not heaped their paths with thorns to prick
Them to an utt'rance. Thus we see it is
That Wrong, on broad and narrow path alike,
At times works wickedly for good—yea, from
Its very foulness yields rich amaranths
Of noble pride ; broad shoots of stern resolve
That staff the victim on to eminence
He else had never seen, not even in dreams !
And though your teacher have a power that needs
No bitter culture to unfold its flower,
Dream not the ill is useless—dream not thou
'Twill mar the work of him who in his heart
Perceives he hath a mission to his kind ;
For he who truly is sincere when spurned
On this will find another path to lead
Him to his goal, and toil thereon with zeal,
Ten-fold increased for this—the souls that scorn
The light do thereby show how much the more
They need it. Dream not thou that ill is ill,
Unmingled. Man, however full and hot

His heart be charged with holy hate of all
Abuses, still not aye 'twere meet that he
Might mould the sparkling thunders of his tongue
To means of honour, ease, or opulence !
When winds go sleep your billows nestle down
To dimples. Ah ! how many lusty limbs
Hath purple paralyzed when sackcloth had
No power ! Behold some champion of "Our rights!"
His curled lip whitening in the gall of castes,
Till in each dew-drop he can see but bolts
In embryo, that wait the wings of warmth
To reach the cloud, thence to descend in thunder !
He walks no more amidst the dust and din
Where strong limbs struggle but to fail : his hand
No longer trembles on the big warm heart
Of that strange, many-minded thing, the MASS—
That heart, whose each pulsation telegraphed
To his the scathing fire that fed his tongue
With words more wasting than a two-edged sword ;
Less of distresses than distinctions now,
He dreams upon his roses as he saith :
The round world swims in beauty—God hath blessed
The world ! *my* task is to enjoy ! Ah, his
Must be an eagle eye that, soaring 'gainst
The sun, can ever humbly hold in view
The low, bare rock that nursed his callow power !

Through life, on broad and narrow path alike,
The mystic circle of a pure intent
Presents a limit to the stretch of ill.
Therein should virtue labour—reckless hoot
Or howl—with ever this in view : the blames
Or laudings of an empty mind are, like
The bowl's wild friendships, hollow as their source !
While that which of the general ear maintains
That it, alas ! a warmer welcome yields
To ill than good report, if not a fraud—
A calumny of foulest lip, betrays,

At least, a blameful negligence of search
Into the causes of effects. For as
A sky-high difference roots between gross ills
And much that seems their like, so is't with this :
Through all the trembling mazes of those chords—
Those living chords—of that strange instrument,
The heart—by Heaven's self attuned—exist.
There none so quick, so apt, to take and give
Impressions as are those set sacredly
Apart to human suffering, or the cause
Of injured innocence ; therefore, as all
Dark tidings, tales of tears, and strong-armed crime,
To these appeal directly, 'tis the heart,
And not the head, provides the umpire—'tis
The feeling—tinging all ideas—sits
As jury, judge and advocate, and hears
And pleads, accuses, justifies, or blames—
Yea, ere the head's sound judgment find a voice,
And so—the ear of Passion being all
Too quick for that of cooler Reason—hath
The calumny some colour of a fact!
The Court's in error ; yet in one which sprung
From source so warm, so almost holy, 'twere
Perhaps a greater to condemn.

All things,
I've said, are needful, not excepting *Wrong*,
Or that which, to thy superficial sight,
Appeareth such. Therefore, until a day
Of holier beam arise, when blissful ends
Can be attained below by kindred means,
Bear thou all meekly, that which bear thou *must* !
And while the nations round thee groan and gasp
Beneath some general ill, lift not thy voice
In impious whine to say that Heaven forgets
The world ; but know thou, rather, that broad ills
To fallen and luxurious States, are but
Medicinal bitters kindly sent to keep

The body-politic in health—yea, more—
Know thou that as in this imperfect state—
The present—pain doth perfect most ill, like
A wind of purifying flame, is whirled
Through human grain to purge, to burn away
The husk ; and so, as sin is part of man
Or human nature, truly as the hand
Or foot is of the frame, the fires which such
Remove must, even as if they did a limb
Devour, be fanned and fed by *pain*. Yea, know
That here, within this prison-house of Time,
Each pardoned buffet of the big world's hand
Shall make thee more of heaven than many prayers ;
Shall round thy soul with beauty ; ay, with power
And glory, like a god, and make thee, flesh,
A kin to Deity Himself. Know thou,
Moreover, that as Emulation reigns,
So oft the nurse of both our good and ill,
The frailent nature trained by Heaven may rise
From dross and dust, to burnish up a soul
Of *model* brightness ; yea, a *copy-light*—
To urge, to force, as if by fire, from out
The veriest chrysalis of apathy
And sloth ; and give to even *active* good
A guiding ray to hills of nobler toil !
Then think, while groaning 'neath that crown of thorns,
The soil and rubbish of thy nature yield,
The moment that it pains thee most may be
But that through which it laboureth for a change—
The next may see it flash upon thy brow,
Each gory point a dripping glory ! Think,
Believe that ill is needful, even thine !
Needful in many, many forms ! at, oh,
How many times ! Needful to turn the eye
From those fair fruits of honey'd rind, but core
Of rue, by fools called joys—by Frenzies forced
And strown along the loftier ways of life
To dazzle and mislead—false joys that fill

Man's vague idea of a passage through
The myst'ries of Corruption, with a host
Of horribles too deadly to be met
By flesh and blood with willingness, e'en though
Such passage led to Heaven's inner chambers !
Ah, me ! were earth a path of flowers without
A flint, how few—how very few—would seek
The shadow on the pallid horse to ope'
The dark and doubtful doors of Change, or lead
To lands whose only claims to better lay
In greater moral power and purity ?
How few would from the Real's banquet 'rise,
And from his eye, his lips, his heart tear out
The known, the felt, the animal delight,
To chase the *chance* of winning home, or crown,
Or world, while such are seen but by the oft
Too hazy moon of Faith ? So, seest thou not
That Faith's most faithful pioneer may be
The iron-handed sceptic, Wrong, who thus
To myriad sluggard souls hath been a kind,
Though *fiery-fingered* guide to God ? Know these
And this—there is in every dark a light—
A right in every Wrong—that waiteth but
On Time to shape its splendour !

Onward, then,

With fearless step, and train thy thinking pow'r,
Full-fledged, to rise from out its sheath of dreams.
What thou hast seen, review ; what yet may come--
For thou hast seen not yet thy noon of toil—
Note well, remembering there is nought, howe'er
So clear, without a veiling surface. This,
The eye, through Love and Labour must, be led
To penetrate before it rightly see
The *true* that lies beneath. Remember, too,
That, as the meanest thing thou meet'st may be
A mightiness, outstripping, whilst thou gaze,
All common process of development,

So is there nothing mean, while, from what seems
Most so, may pure Inquiry nurse wherewith
To skim the threshold of Infinity.

And now look back upon thine other days,
And see if there is nought like this amongst
Thy fancies flung upon the winds for good :

Fearful and frowning, ah, say not,
Sister my own !

Truth is a tree that earth's soil won't nourish;

Bloom every where, though it may not—

Still is it grown—

Still are there spots where its broad boughs flourish
Lovely, though lone—

Lovely, though lone—

Scathed nor in white bloom, vigour, nor stature

our darker nature

In the sincerest—

Sister, believe me—
Then shouldst thou walk where there's aught would
deceive thee.

Pray for it, dearest !

Yea, with faith in the world go meet it,
Sister of mine—

Even though life be no lane of roses—

Go, with these sweet words ever repeated:

"Father, 'tis thine!"

And lone on some wild, where no sweet reposes,
Nor fair lights shine

Thou shalt see 'neath the plant which the soft flesh
stingeth,

With balm for the wound, how the green leaf springeth—
Ever and ever,
Sister, thou'llt find it

Sister, thou'lt find it.
Blot light behind it.

Ne'er gloomed the cloud without light behind it—
Bless'd be the Giver!"

Diess a be the Giver :

The Vision held her peace, and I perceived

That what, till then, had seemed a tinted shade—

The mere reflection of her form had life
And action all its own—a younger shape
That led the elder wheresoe'er it would.
A marvellous beauty 'twas, and female-like—
A modest Glory—like a statue, hewn
From out a star ! Her fair, smooth brow and cheek
Revealed a clear, warm light, but spiritual,
As rock-born waters, rippling 'neath the moon !
Her ripe lips trembled, and her downcast eyes
Through tend'rest pink and azure gleamed, and seemed
As if they strove to stay a sad, sweet smile
From struggling into tears. Down through a wreath
Of partly-faded flowers—those wildlings meek,
The pale Forget-me-not—her ringlets rolled
In ebon masses o'er two curtaining wings,
Which seemed of finest, fleetest sunbeams wove ;
While o'er and through their lustrous plumage glowed
All beauteous tints perceived on earth and heaven !
A robe that looked as wrought of rosy mists,
And edged with such white light as girds the moon,
Beneath two heaving hills of sun-tipped snow,
And mid-way on the softly tinted limbs,
With heaven's own azure lined, and round the arms
Of pearly ray was caught with living stars
Of rainbow tinge and freezing beam. One arm
An ample mantle bore of dusky blue,
Or hazy gray, or that strange tint that hath
No name, which Time and Distance paint before
The eyes of mind. One hand upheld a harp
Of many strings, which ever now and then,
By unseen fingers touched, winged wailing forth
Some phantom of long-perished melody ;
Her other hand a moon-like Tablet bore,
Athwart whose face of silv'ry fire there streamed
A maze of mystic lines and changing hues—
Of skies and seasons—clouds and suns and storms,
Tall mountains, groves and vales, and green-limbed
waves—

Not mute or motionless, like art, but full
Of boisterous life and bellowing voice—not waves
In fixed, inactive, ill-affected wrath,
But living, heaving things that sank and soared—
That up on white sky-covering wings pursued
The flying cloud, or sat and coldly couched
Their quivering breasts to rude red-fingered beams.

Then forward moved she, but in moving shewed
No motion of a tread ; and yet her limbs
In every swelling muscle shook, and sent
A glory from and round them as she neared—
And neared—a crystal column, pierced at each
Translucent pore, by light's empurpling shafts,
Till having waxed, in her most strange excess
Of beauty, terrible, her movement stayed,
While from her fingers, as they wandered o'er
That mystic Tablet, languid lustres streamed
In pallor lovely as the dying stars
That shrink and shy from morning's rosier waters !

Beneath her folded mantle then I saw—
Till then unseen—a bristling sheaf of shafts,
Each barbed with flame, but winged with healing flowers!
And then, behold, I saw, mid-air, above
Her brow an infant spirit sportive swim !
Twas borne on wings of every tint, from which
The light of heaven hath drawn its beams, and they
In texture seemed much like that net of pearls
The insect hunter weaves from early mists
Of Summer morns to hang around the rose,
Or o'er the love-sick lily's brow of snow !
Its features were of changing beauty, like
The bosom of a brook on moonlit nights
By breezes tip-toe trod ; and as a brook
Reveals a dreamy duplicate of each
O'erhanging leaf, so did those features glass
The more peculiar traits of her who bore

The Tablet, making close relationship
Most clear. It waved a wand of many hues
Of ever-changing light and shade—a wand
Of feathers woven from the train of that
Fair bird who, with a thousand crescent moons,
His Summer glory lights, and as it waved,
Behold, each shadow on the Tablet changed—
As swift as thought—its manner, form, or hue,
To meet each mood that changeful face assumed.

Then I perceived with wonder that on this
Strange Camera had my eye been fixed throughout
The anguished action of each hour ; and that
Its range of outline varied still to suit
The view's requirements. Yea, still more : I saw
That gazing thus and there the eye did seem
Most strangely to have linked with what the eye
Performs—the office of the ear. It drank
In sounds as well as sights !

Meanwhile the woman 'rose,
And, looking upward, raised her hands and said :

" 'Tis not till all the worst is done we know
What good the worst can do. All good is God's !
Father of Love, I thank thee ! 'Tis Thy voice
That speaks through my experience ; and I hear
Through this the footsteps of returning health ;
For congregated facts have trumpet tongues,
Which to sane souls most eloquently preach,
And dear Memoria ne'er her mother leads
To pour their counsel on a brain diseased.

Thy will be done, and blessed be Thy will !
And I shall wear these holy truths within
The hidden chambers of my secret soul ;
Where also, with a more than common care,
The secret of my life, my ills I'll keep

In sound, in sight—in all—from worldly eye
And ear.

What I have done I've *done*, and much
I've done amiss, with, haply, something now
And then that Thou shalt judge with kindlier voice
Than most below. O'er each erratic step
Thou knowest all I've felt ; and though my good,
At best, may not have merited or gained
Th' approval of my kind, it was *my* good !
What I did do I *did*, and for the best ;
If right, the motive and the deed themselves
Are surely more than are the means employed !
If I have drawn my neighbour from a pit,
Wilt thou, in judging, only seek to know
The texture or material of the cords
I used, or learn what school or fellow-worm
Bestowed its sanction on their shape ?
If I've been washed till white in Jesu's blood
Wilt thou o'erlook the thing so purified,
And wish to learn of nought but whether 'twere
The *this* or *that*—the right hand or the left—
Performed the cleansing rite ? *My* light saith ' No !'
And if my light be darkness, somewhat's wrong !
There's something somewhere wrong, for I have sought
The light ! and not with dreamy saunter, like
Some nursery maid who picketh painted shells
Along a strand, and spurns the goodly pearl,
Which, in its rougher sheath, she grinds beneath her
Heel ; but I, with miser's eye, have sought
Through meanest, as through brightest, things that came—
Within my reach, and, breathless, ran from this
To that, my soul made heavy with the thought
That time was short, and my *large* want was more
Important, precious, needful than all time !
Thus came my light or darkness, whatsoe'er
It be ! If darkness be it, surely Thou
For such hast pardon, seeing that my soul

Hath been deceived, and that my life hath borne
The loss—the loss of much that maketh life
A boon ! I'm weak and blind ; but Thou ! Thou'rt all
In all ! And if my way of life hath been
A backward tread—if I began and passed
From last to first, yea, even from the end,
That my beginning should have been—the whim,
The dangerous whim hath worn itself away,
And left a lesson—ay, a peace ; and though
A peace with many blood-gouts dashed, 'tis still
A peace ! Thy name be praised !

On other paths

What I have done I've done, as heretofore !
If I have erred I've *erred* ! The good was still
Within my soul, though human weakness may
Have changed the thing to evil in my hand.
My hand ! ah, well ! The good that grows from e'en
The largest hand is little good, indeed !
I dreamt to serve my kind ; and if the point—
The living atom—may such wonders work
Throughout wild ocean's world-embracing arms—
If insect life from deep sea's deepest deeps
Not only piles a continent—a world—
But from the grasp of e'en minutest drop
Materials wrencheth for its work, and sets
As well the life-springs of the huge wave-heart
At large to dash through million-milèd veins—
Say wherefore might not I—God's likeness, though
In clay—a woman, lowly, lone, have dreamt
Of work to do, and of a way whereby
To do—for ne'er was work without the way ?
And musing thus it was, far back among
The years, I had my dreams—my little dreams
Of human freedom, holy freedom ! Not
The freedom of a few who, banding 'neath
Some common name, do battle with all good—
However good—or ill alike, that on

Its frontlet beareth not the party sign
And seal. I loathed such freedom ! Freedom ? ay,
The freedom to enslave and persecute
Whomso' refused to desecrate, as they,
True Freedom's sacred name !

'Twas thus I dreamt,
And sought to give my dream a form, as e'en
My mite of action might have passed to swell
The fair account of honest toil from some
Who haply did but dream as I. If I
In this have erred, then I have erred ! If I
Have ceased to err,'tis well ; I have not ceased
To live, and we shall see !'

And speaking thus,
The white-faced woman caught her tresses, tossed
And tangled, from the cold, rough-fingered breeze ;
And having folded each upon her brow
With ready reckless hand, looked forth upon
The dense, deep dark, that, like a wall of pitch,
'Rose from her feet and leant against the heavens,
As if to gate the path she seemed to choose ;
For all around, save that in front, flashed bright
As mid-day glory. Then, a moment o'er
The grave beneath her feet she ran a glance
That spoke of soul's disquiet. 'Twas a glance
Of moment's length—no more. She raised her brow
To Heaven, and while her lips made silent speech,
Her eye flung out a steadfast light that told
Of resignation and an iron will ;
And thus, unnoting any presence, she
Went forth with queenly tread, like one who goes
To mingle with a world well known, and work
Its work, and meet its praise or blame alike.
So passed she, and was lost amid the dark.

I looked around, and lo ! I was alone

With that young infant spirit whose small hand
The feathery sceptre swayed : all else were gone !
And then I felt within my hanging hand
The playful fingers of the sprite. They toyed
A moment, then closed round with firmer grasp,
As though their owner sought to force my feet
To some advance. I yielded to the wish,
And found myself hard by th' ungraven stone
That marked the new-made grave ; and then, behold !
The infant marvel passed the crescent-tip
Of that strange sceptre, zig-zag, o'er the stone,
And straightway there appeared thereon a maze
Of mystic characters that by-and-by
Put forth a phosphorent tint, and then
Took form of words, and measured lines that glowed
In many hues, and when I looked, read thus :

“ He wooed a spirit of Earth’s noblest race—
A soul of Love, Sincerity, and Song—
But recked too little when she suffered wrong ;
Loved Truth and Freedom in their holiest place ;
Saw masking foes, and spat them in the face !
So, like a vein of silver, branched along
The clayey natures that he walked among,
He struck no root : an unacknowledged grace,
He lived to them. Filled with such thoughts as pass,
When nobly uttered, into kingly deeds,
He was to fools a shadow on the grass—
A breathing mirror to their battling creeds—
To Virtue, light ; to Vice, consuming flame—
A man of many titles, but no name !”

I read, and as I read the coloured words
And lines, dissolving one by one, each pass’d
Into the gen’ral light, so that when I,
The last, had read, the last was gone. But, lo !
While still this last was passing through my lips,
Two mighty spirits, one a younger, led

By one with hoary locks but iron limbs,
Of lusty youth, and winged with lightnings broad
And luminous, did sweep along our path
Like lightning's self, and bare us forward on
The dark, which still retreated as we sped.
And still the infant spirit—that which bare
The crescent wand—my fingers held, as though
It sought to aid the mightier in their wish
To bear me captive, soothing me the while
With freaks of pleasant cunning, now and then
My wondering gaze directing to the wild,
The magic fancies—uncouth whims of face
And form—the younger shape of mightiness
Assumed at every sweep of soundless wing,
While all he touched in passing seemed to don
The same transforming freaks of power too !

I may not tell, nor may'st thou know what scenes
Of most bewildering beauty came and went,
Or rather flashed and fell before us, while
We smote the solemn night ; and while those wings
Of all-illumining lightnings swept our path
Of ever-changing forms, nor of the sights—
The wild, heart-withering sights of guilt and woe
That flowed and ebbed upon our passing track.

We swam, we flew, we shot along the face
Of things like shooting stars, or swifter, till,
Behold, I felt as waxing faint, and leant
Me, with a shuddering love, which was not love,
Or if it were, 'twas love of rest alone,
Upon the hoary spirit's breast, and sighed :
“ How far—go we much farther thus ? ” While spake
He through the gentlest whisper : “ Come and see ! ”
Then onward, onward swept we till we came
To where each breath of air seemed charged with tongues
Of eating ice that lapped all warmth from out
My veins, while stiff and feeble waxed my limbs ;

And through my flying hair there passed a breath
That fixed a wiry silver here and there,
And thinned the ebon framework of each tress.
Nor longer did the wall of darkness flee
Before those night-consuming wings ; and once
Again I whispered—"Flee we farther much?"
And once again heard answer—"Come and see!"
Then rose the infant spirit on his wing
Of woven pearls ; and while these sparkled through
That lightning-pinion's shine—their thousand hues
And all the lustrous beauty of his form
More lustrous-looking still—behold, he raised
His crescent sceptre, smiting on the wall
Of darkness till a silvery cleft appeared,
And then a gush of most bewildering light !
Then with a playful finger on the cleft,
And in his eye the light of deeper thought,
He looked, as if out through my soul, and said :
"Behold ! a land, indeed, for thee and me."

I lifted up my eyes and looked, and, lo !
A scene of all-surpassing loveliness.
It was a land of hill and vale, of towns
And towers, lakes and streams, and lofty woods,
And over all a bright, but tender, veil
Of golden light that slept upon the blue
Of waters, and along the softened green
Of vegetation, like a gauzework, filled
With most minute and many-tinted globes
Of crystal, softening down the glare and all
The sharper outlines, while to all it gave
That fairy beauty distance wears in dreams,
Or when the eye may pierce the rainbow's limbs
At eventide. And o'er the wooded heights,
Behold, I saw large flocks of birds that swam
On silvery pinions, wearing pleasant forms,
And filling space with most delicious song.
And in the vales beneath I also saw

Strange birds, of feather grim, and claw and beak,
Resembling much those monstrous shapes that met
My gaze on other grounds, And, lo ! I saw,
Amid those cawing clouds that never rose
Upon the wing, a straggling band of men,
In pastor's raiment, having on their cheeks
The tints of various climes, and on their arms
Or shoulders, sheets, resembling those from which
The till-man broadcast streweth, save that these
Were in and out with mystic characters—
That with a gentle glory shone—inscribed.
And ever were the bearer's hands thrust down
The sower's sheet, and ever strewed they forth
A streamy cloud of shining seeds, and still
Of these the cawing creatures ate, and while
They ate, behold, they changed to forms of most
Exceeding beauty, pouring forth loud strains
Of all entrancing joy. Then, far away,
I raised my wondering eyes, and saw the form
Of her—the white-faced woman—who had passed
Before me through the dark. And then I saw
Her glide, with girded loins and bleeding feet,
And streaming hair, but with a queenly step,
And brow erect, amongst the joyous flock,
And from her bosom draw, and in their midst
Pour forth a gush of many-tinted seeds,
Which they did eat, and ever waxed in form
And plumage lovelier than before. And lo !
I saw a man whose likeness seemed to say
He was the man who died, but that his face,
His all, was fairer, firmer—more, perhaps,
What saints believe the Born-again to be.
And then I heard a voice—it was the voice
Of him—the man who died—who seemed to be
Some keeper of the grounds ; and while he met
The white-faced woman with a look of joy
And hand of kindly greetings, said :

“ Why pass
We not with those ?”

And pointing, while he spake,
Towards the striding sowers, said again :

“ Pass on, pass on ! Whate'er thy hand may find
To do, that do with all thy might !”

But she
Said :

“ Nay ! Therein we erred before : we
May not *lead*, but *follow* these ; so Christ shall bless
Our toil !”

And then she passed, while I exclaimed,
“ Ah, me ! Why thus should she, a toiler, walk
With bleeding feet, and all those many marks
Of pain and peril still ?”

And by my side
The mighty spirit, on whose cold, rough breast
I leant, made quiet answer—“ Come and see !”
But he, the sprite, who bore the crescent wand,
Replied :

“ And might it not be his who shews
The picture to explain ? What heretofore
Thou hast beheld may be thine own—may stud
Thine own life-track with certain lights, which shew,
Although retouched by me, what thou hast seen
Before, and seen with pain ; but this is mine !
And may not individual life have traits
Of broader meaning—yea, illustrate life
In all its earth-extending ways ? Might these
Whom thou hast seen and sorrowed o'er so much,
So long, in flesh and blood, have not a breadth
Of application more important far

Than any individual life or lives,
Or rights or wrongs ? Take note ; I do but guess !
Let's fix an item here and there, and thou,
At leisure, may'st of them dispose as suits
Thy whim—fill up the whole where filling up
Is asked, or fling the whole before thee o'er
The winds. For me, I but suggest, as thus :

I saw the world's refinement—love of light,
Of kind—Progression, in a word, walk forth
And take unto himself his better, more
Ethereal half. I saw them, hand in hand,
Go through the wilds and desert ways of life,
And try, by human strength alone, to lift
The night-mare off the sleeping world. But, nay !
That might not be. And if to these, who leant
Upon themselves, and not on Him who gives
Or takes all power—the devils, as of old,
Exclaimed, 'yea, this we know, and that, but who
Are ye ? Should that, thy marvel, much excite ?
And if the lord of Voiceways perceived
That dying unto much would be a means
Of living unto more—that passing through
A haply worse than death, might win a state
Wherein the things he loved, and those that still
Loved him, might meet and work with happier end
And issue ; wonder not. If, though he died
To much, he have not died to all, that puts
The stain of earth on every human brow,
However fair—if, still, throughout the world
The more ethereal good must wade through thorn
And flint, and having gathered wisdom, walk
With tattered robe and bleeding feet, and he,
The watchman on the world's advance, remain
Blindfolded to the ill, he's yet of earth,
And thou need'st marvel not. I've done. Fill up
The picture I have sketched, and lay it past!"

"And who art thou," I said, "that sketchest so ?"

He smiled, and while a weird-like archness lurked
Within his side-long gaze, he ran his hand
Along the crescent of his wand and said :

"If guesser, gilder, painter—e'en a god
Throughout the world of mind I said I am,
I would but say what many say. Howe'er,
My province is to guess, to gild, to paint,
Extend, or re-arrange, and make a new,
Or seeming new, from old material. Thus :

Nine notes—nine figures—make our old and new,
In melodies and merchants' ledgers, too !

I am the child of one whose business 'tis
To deal in pictures—e'en of those from whom
She hath her source—therefore an artist I
Became. My mother deals with facts, and yet
Her son hath got a Fancy's finger."

Then

He smiled again, and with his sceptre cut
Strange figures in the air ; while I from those
Huge spirits at my side lift up my eyes
To him with asking look. He smiled, and said :

"I saw the Father of the worlds stoop down
And dip his finger-tip in that broad sea
That hath no shore. A shining atom from
That finger jerked he into space. If thou
On this hast leant thus far, herein is no
Great cause for marvel. See ! The foam is yet
Upon his locks. The younger is his son—"

He ceased ; or rather 'twas his voice that sank
Beneath the currents of my ear, and 'neath
The bounding volume of a larger voice

Which, though a female's, rang in compass broad
 And grasping, but in sweetness, and in depth
 Of feeling, less of earth than heaven. The words :

" Whoe'er would serve his kind for God-like ends
 Must wed the world, with all its dark and bright—
 Must wed the world, then shroud it from his sight,
 And, prophet-like, where wild o'er wild extends,
 Take up his cross, or whatso' Heaven sends !
 Till—with a soul beyond the common height—
 A soul made mighty in her Maker's might
 Beyond the fear of foes, the laud of friends—
 He shape his gleanings ; but, with pray'rful heed,
 That from the rostrum of his true heart-scorn
 For all that, coming, cometh not aright !
 He drop no tares through God's transforming seed,
 Till, like another Saviour, crowned with thorn,
 He shout his knowledge from the gates of morn !"

I heard, and was alone—when, all at once,
 Upon my eye *a rosy vacuum glowed* !
 I raised my brow—against the lattice had
 It leant, and lo ! the opening east was strown
 With clouds that gleamed like *porcelain lamps*, for morn
 Had filled their veins with golden oil !

And thus,

Sweet friend—sweet Emily—I have told my tale.
 " And who were these—and who art thou ?" Methinks
 I hear thee whisper. Ah ! we veil our eyes
 On much that *is*, to dream of what is *not*,
 And so too seldom know or note the strange
 Duality of natures, building up
 The individual—holding in each heart
 Their battling carnival. But, till we pluck
 The grosser from its feast of flesh, and hide
 It, ocean-deep, though half our earthly hopes—
 Ay, seeming soul-requirements—sink therewith,

We face the sun with sightless eye—our ways
Are lava lakes, or cypress swamps—our mates
And means sepulchral shadows ; life's a woe,
And death—who knoweth ? Hush ! A poetess ?
Alas ! a hill-born echo of the wind,
Was I, an answer to the blast that pierced !





Songs of the Desert.

THE DAWN.

BENEATH a gray moon's fitful light
I walked a vast and wondrous vale—
A land of beauty, strangely bright,
Whose lulling odours drowned the gale ;
And now through light, and now through shade,
From flower to flower, I trifled on ;
And, though the moon begun to fade,
I never wished for day to dawn.

Upon a mound, amidst the vast,
I stood at length, alone and chill,
While all the perfume of my past
Came stealing round that little hill ;
But poisons seemed therein to swim—
The subtle sweets that lulled had gone !
And while I watched the moon grow dim
I sighed, and wished for day to dawn !

I wandered through a tangled wood—
The briars and thorns around me clung ;
My hands and feet were streaming blood—
My faithful cloak in tatters hung ;

The feet of evil beasts had cleft
Whate'er I strode or stumbled on,
And, now, of moon and stars bereft,
I tried to pray for day to dawn.

Winged monsters seemed to swarm the air,
That round me rang with hellish din ;
Strange vipers stung my bosom bare,
But stranger still, there stung within ;
And all around glared eyes of fire,
Whose lights, though withering, lured me on,
Till knelt I in the fetid mire,
And weeping—weeping, prayed for dawn.

A little spark—more felt than seen !
As if my wish, in light arrayed,
Had stol'n to glance the glooms between—
Seemed clearing—nearing, while I prayed ;
Till, lo ! it came, in veins of light—
A silver net-work round me drawn,
While rolled my voice along the night—
“ My Lord ! my God !—the dawn ! the dawn !

The day—the dawn ! It neared—it cleared,
But tender still as light in dreams,
Till, ah, a wondrous One appeared,
Who seemed Himself to be the beams !
He raised me with a look of love,
And whispered—“ Courage ! Haste we on !
I sighed, but feared to looked above :
“ The sinner's prayer hath brought the dawn ! ”

For, oh ! a glory round me spread,
That filled with light the famished lands ;
But thorns begirt the bright One's head,
And pierced and bleeding were His hands ;
The dews of night were in His hair—
Those locks that burnished gold outshone,
And though His feet were gashed and bare,
They seemed themselves to be the dawn !

"Oh thou long lost!—and art thou found,
 No more from Peace and me to roam?
 Behold!"—He sighed, and shewed each wound—
 " 'Twas all, my son, to bring thee Home!
 And lo! the night is wearing fast—
 Then steadfast speed thou bravely on—
 The Brook is near that *must* be passed—
 But, there, I'll meet thee at the dawn!"



THE WONDERSOME ONE.

"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Ever-lasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—*Isa. ix. 6.*

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him."—*Isa. liii. 10.*

In the light of a beauty that seemed in all eyes
 Too bright for abode with us under the sun,
 We walked when in humblest of fisherman's guise;
 We followed the voice of the Wonderful One.
 'Twas a voice like the music that trembles through song,
 Wherein Hope hath no ray but the light of her tears—
 'Twas the voice of a king, as if wrestling among
 The torturing shadows of heartbroken years!
 Oh, that voice and that form! Oh, that face and that
 smile!
 And that love for our kind so mysteriously deep;
 And that pause while He bent o'er the outcast and vile,
 In His gentle rebukings to pity and weep!
 Oh, wonderful love, with such wonderful woe,
 And so linked with a power that nothing could bar!
 At His beck the wild tempests their wings muffled low,
 And the ocean they traversed lay still as a star!
 Or as free flashed His feet o'er the billows' white crest,
 As the virgins at eve along Gallilee's shore;
 While the blind and the lame and the leper, He blest
 With the gifts by our Father withholden before!

To the couch where disease with the mortal held strife,
Sped, unuttered, His will, and the striving was done ;
By the place of the dead, Resurrection and Life,
Was the finger or voice of that Wonderful One !

Every ill, as it rose, even hell, or its hosts,
His breath from their proudest of pinnacles hurled ;
While His love, though He lingered by Israel's coasts,
Like His Father's warm firmament, circled the world !
Yet an outcast, reviled, He was bruised and distrest,
As our Covenant Angel, 'twas written should be ;
Ah, the fox had his hole, and the fowl had her nest,
But a place for His storm-beaten brow had not He !

Then so mournfully calm was that voice when He spake
Of His leaving us—dying by torture—ere long !
Oh, how slow were our hearts to believe or to break,
Or to dream of our Wondrous One vanquished by wrong !
He, a king, so confessed—yea, our glory to be
When the standard of David our Judah unfurled—
Through the mists of humanity—ah, who could see
That His crown or His kingdom was not of this world ?

Oh then thou in the blood of God's prophets asleep—
Thou, the recreant Jerusalem—recreant still !
How oft o'er that sleep He stole lonely to weep,
When the night winds howled over green Olivet's hill ;
But thine hour is at hand, and the cup of thy guilt—
That cup of thy trembling, long full to the brim—
Shall overflow, till, behold, all the blood thou hast spilt
Be avenged in the light of what floweth from Him !

But, O city of beauty, where homeless He trod,
Flashed it ne'er through the night of thy guile to divine
How the wisdom, the love, the *salvation* of God,
Might be worked by those poor little envies of thine—
That thy Prophet, if slain on the hell of thy hates,
In the end might establish His kingdom of grace,
And His Cross be the key to lay open life's gates
To the penitent sons of your perishing race ?

Ah, thou knew'st not, nor we, on that sad Pascal eve,
When to sup with His Twelve sat He down for the last ;
But we knew by that eye how His spirit did grieve
In its glance o'er the future, the present, and past ;
He had loved us so long—ah, so long and so well—
With a love so mysterious, o'er-arching and true,
That the tear, where it gleamed, was not needed to tell
Of how truly *the traitor* had shared in it too !

But his pale forehead flashed, as if pained at the tear
That a swift-summoned smile sought to veil or remove ;
And His musical voice rippled fresh on the ear
In its heart-breaking tremour of exquisite love.
“ Yea, I go, as 'tis written,” He falteringly said :
“ But when thus henceforward assembled ye be”—
Sore we wept while He paused, till, in breaking the bread,
Sighed He, “ This, *do ye this, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME !* ”

In remembrance of Thee ? O, our Beauteous, our Blest,
Till the day of Thy coming our holiest employ
Shall be to abide by Thy dying request—
The sign of Thy sorrow, the seal of our joy !
Oh, to come and in tears to dream over that face,
So young, yet so wasted by travail and care,
Shall be Heaven itself, if, by Heavenly grace,
We may feel in our souls, though unseen, Thou art
there !

Oh, for true love's humility ! Surely amazed
Did the angels look down on that humble retreat,
When “ The Light of the World,” from the table upraised,
Bent lowly to wash His poor fishermen's feet !
Then, warm through His sorrows, our Servant, our Lord,
On each soul that His cleansing had made as the snows,
Fresh streams of the holiest solacement poured,
Till our hymn to the Father that evening arose !

But the night cometh cloaked, like a servant of doom !
Through the blackness of space reigns a mystical calm.
One star through a rift, like a lamp in a tomb,
To the garden of agony lighteth the Lamb !

Then the rest ! ah, the rest ! O earth's voices be still !
 What the Infinite bruised can the finite reveal ?
 Thine anguished "Elois!" O Calvary Hill !
 Make known scarce the *manner* of depths they conceal !
 But, lo ! as the morn, from his prison of night,
 Cometh forth in the summer, his glories all new,
 So arose the Anointed again on our sight,
 And the veil from our eyes or His beauty withdrew ;
 He came and is gone, but the Bride, though she mourns,
 Doth oft in the spirit His loveliness see ;
 For He, radiant in grief as in glory, returns
 When she feasts o'er that sweet "In remembrance of
 Me!"

"Then, come!" saith the Spirit—the Bride crieth "Come !
 Thou, O man ! who to man's dying word so attends,
 Canst thou turn away recklessly, *guiltily*, from
 The last wish of thy *first* and most faithful of Friends?"
 Ah, lowly One, Holy One, low at Thy feet,
 While we kneel to Thee, list to Thee soothing our fears,
 Only suffer our eyes, as those nail-prints they meet,
 To fill the red gashes, dear Saviour, with tears !

EGYPT.

With tears from Pisgah's holier air
 May upward wanderers see,
 If not so false—how wondrous fair
 The land they've left might be.
 O Egypt—Egypt, though thy vales
 Flash bright with corn and wine,
 A soulless, sickening something trails
 O'er all that wealth of thine !

A thousand lamps illume thy halls
 Through all their thousand aisles ;
 A thousand maidens serve thy calls
 With spices and with smiles :

In rainbow tints thy gardens glow—
Their airs are scent and song !
The servile streams that for thee flow
Those symphonies prolong.

Thy lamps ! they shed but hues of death !
Yea, that thy walls are high,
Yon smiling maidens, 'neath their breath
Hide many a strangled cry !
The rose, itself, whereon thou'dst rest,
But wounds thy vext repose ;
The stream, that shows thee in its breast,
Distorts the face it shows !

Yea, all is *false*, however *fair*—
All peace but empty form ;
The lull that wraps thine evening chair
Is that before the storm !
Such vileness broods through all thy bounds,
That all must bear its sting—
Thy purest prayer of something sounds
That crucified THE KING !

Thus stridest thou in guilt—in state !
O'er many a *serf* and *sod* ;
And sayest, “ my hand hath made me great ! ”
For *self* alone's thy god !
The god for whom thine ensigns float
O'er seas thou turn'st to gore—
Thy fingers thrust at every throat,
To bring thine idol more !

O Egypt, once and *still* accurst,
Thy murders murmur “ When—
When shall her bloated idol burst,
Whose food's the blood of men ? ”
Look down, look down, O Lord of Hosts,
Till heaven and earth a-glow,
Shall fire, through all her *gilded* coasts,
The god she serveth so !

CANAAN.

FROM Nebo's heights, how beauteous seem
Thy homes, O Israel!
In glory, passing prophet's dream,
Thy happy children dwell ;
On flower or face no shadow falls
From sorrow or from sin—
That land, begirt with sapphire walls,
Hath nothing false therein !

Though through her vales, in golden ears,
An endless harvest shines,
Eternal spring conducts her years
Through all their mystic signs,
While glory, soft as ocean's foam,
Doth round each hill repose ;
And in yon Rock the honeycomb
That only Israel knows. •

One single STAR that land illumes—
Of peace the sign and seal ;
And there, that Tree immortal blooms,
Whose leaves the nations heal !
No lightnings look her spires upon—
No tempests walk her shore—
There waters sleep like molten sun ;
But sea there is no more !

There, psalmful breezes—psalmful brooks,
In one eternal strain,
Adore THE KING who lowly looks,
As lamb that had been slain !
And, whispering joy through every home,
A living stream there flows
From out yon Rock whose honeycomb
Our Israel only knows !

O Home of homes ! O Joy of joys !
When shall we share your song
With loved ones, lost to tearful eyes—
Our beauteous, true and young ?
Not yet ! Not yet ! A spectre waits
THE KING's good time, as we—
The walls are high—strong, strong the gates—
That spectre keeps the key !

Then lead us—guide us—Prince of Peace,
Through time's impatient sands ;
And while their blinding drifts increase,
Be Thou our cleansing hands !
And, till within that holier Home,
Oh grant our souls repose,
On Thee, the Rock, whose honeycomb
Thine Israel only knows.

THE LOVE THAT LOVETH BEST.

BOWED with guilt too dark to name,
Tottering to the Cross I came,
Crying, Jesus, where may I
From Thy righteous vengeance fly ?
If a deeper hell there be,
Oh, 'twas surely meant for me !

Jesus answered—Come and rest
On thine Elder Brother's breast ;
Thou art worn as worn can be,
Lay that burden here on Me ;
Thou art weak and I am strong—
Oh, I've waited for thee long !

Blessed Jesus, on my way,
I have seen Thee day by day ;
Heard Thine agonizing cry—
Saw Thy tears, and passed Thee by—

Lamb of God, it cannot be
After all Thou'dst pardon me !

Son, I've sought and called thee long—
Sorrowed o'er thy doings wrong ;
Night and morn did watch and wait
Pleading as thine hour grew late ;
As it is, oh, come and rest
Here upon thy Brother's breast !

Loving Saviour, night and morn
Have I held Thy name in scorn ;
Saw Thee in Thy worst distress—
Walked my way of wantoness ;
Loved my crimes, and hated Thee—
Saviour, can'st Thou pardon me ?

Son, a crown, I've made thine own—
Robe and ring and sapphire throne ;
Thou wast dead, and art alive,
Armed, with Death and Hell to strive !—
All the glory given to Me,
Hence I freely share with thee !



BENEDICTIONS.

Matthew v. 1-13.

As cluster round some luscious rest
The migratory bees,
So, where the Saviour stands confest,
The multitudes He sees ;
And up the mountain's sacred sod,
The mount's meek Maker goes,
Till, from that spotless Lamb of God
A stream of Blessing flows !

It sheets with love each thorny way,
Our world for worth prepares :
The poor in spirit, blest are they,
For Heaven's bright kingdom's theirs !
And blessed are the souls that mourn
With holy grief o'er wrong—
The peace they've lost shall yet return
And jubilant years prolong.

The meek, too, blessing, God hath blest—
The earth and all therein
Shall they inherit, ere their rest
Their HOLIER rest begin ;
And they who after righteousness
With thirst and hunger strain,
The God of Blessings shall them bless
Till ne'er a want remain !

The pure in heart, they're blessed, too—
Their Maker they shall see !
And blest are all who peace pursue—
God's children shall they be !
And O, ye souls, who, suffering, groan
For sake of righteousness,
Before the saints around His throne,
My Father shall you bless !

And blest are ye, when for My sake
Shall men your names revile—
When charges false they o'er you make,
In every form of guile.
Rejoice ! yea, be exceeding glad,
For Heaven's your high reward—
Lo ! wrongs as bleeding still have had
The prophets of the Lord.



THE CHRISTIAN'S EXODUS.

THE songs of Egypt's leaven,
We sang, O Lord, too long ;
But, hence, of "Bread from Heaven,"
Make Thou each voice as strong ;
For Goshen we've forsaken,
With all its godless cheer ;
And staff and scrip we've taken—
Oh, bless Thy pilgrims here !

What though, may oft surround us,
The lion and the blast,
Thy holy arms around us,
The worst shall soon be past ;
The Red Sea rolls behind us,
The Jordan looms before ;
But, ah, each gloom assigned us
Thy fire-flag moveth o'er !

And if the wild discloses
No bright Egyptian hall—
If deserts nurse no roses,
The land beyond them shall ;
And till the night grow hoary
In everlasting day,
Behind our cloud of glory
We'll journey as we may !

Should little ones grow weary,
Or aged ones get weak—
Should Heaven, itself, look dreary
Without one starry streak,
We'll raise our song the clearer—
Oh, ne'er was Guide so fond !
For, lo ! the Jordan's nearer,
Our "Rest" is just beyond !

BEAUTY AND LOVE.

To Thee, O God, let thanks and praise
Ascend from all our works and ways ;
For earth below, and heaven above,
Proclaim that all Thine own are love !

How beauteous moon and stars appear
To him who feels his God is near ;
But cold and dim 's the blaze of day
If Jesu's face be turned away.

How beauteous all we feel or see—
The furrowed vale or flowery tree—
If, at the moment felt or seen,
Without Thy hand it had not been !

O, Thou that clothest so the sod—
Creative fancy of our God !
What shalt Thou be in Courts divine,
When, clothed in Christ, our souls shall shine ?

—————

ABIDE WITH US.

ABIDE with us, Thy pilgrims here,
The day's far spent—the night is near ;
Abide with us, O Saviour dear,
Our journey feels so lone.

We've roamed and wrought, with heat oppressed,
And though too seldom done our best,
We're weary, and we long for rest—
Oh, guide us to Thine own !

The world's cold glitter we have seen,
And to its idols bowed have been ;
But since our lintel's blood-red sheen
Yon night's death-angel stayed.
We've trod, at times, the wilderness,
To love our flesh-pots less and less,
Till thus the Lord, our Righteousness,
Hath met us where we strayed !

Then, oh, desert us never more—
 Thou loved'st us, O Lord, before
 A wrinkled wave or mountain hoar
 On time had bared a brow !
 Thou loved'st us—ah, yes, Thou loved,
 When Thou had'st read our souls, and proved
 The depths of guilt wherein they moved—
 Thou wont desert us now !

Our sun has stained its western sky—
 The coming night will soon pass by ;
 O Thou on whom our souls rely,
 Abide with us till day.
 We know not whether morn shall bring
 A pilgrim's staff or spirit's wing ;
 Oh hence to Thee—to Thee we cling,
 Who art the "Life and Way!"

Nor staff, nor wing, nor way have we
 But Thee, sweet Jesus, only Thee !
 Oh, by yon stains on Calvary !
 Oh, by our hopes and fears !
 And by Thy wounds, so deep, so wide—
 Thy bleeding hands, Thy streaming side—
 Abide with us till morning-tide,
 We pray, with groans and tears !



THE CALL THAT BRINGETH.

I saw the roses wither—
 Leaf after leaf decay ;
 Till all the summer's beauty
 Had faded quite away ;
 Till far o'er earth and heaven,
 Around me and above,
 Seemed nothing left to worship—
 Seemed little left to love.

And then, in selfish sorrow,
I sat me down and sighed :
My way is dark and lonely,
How *very lone* ! I cried ;
My sun of life, long sinking,
Is slow to find the west ;
So slow, and *I* so laden—
Would God that I had rest !

“ Ah, wherefore,” something whispered,
“ Should Reason marvel so.
If one who feels so laden
Find journeying here so slow ?
Behold, ‘tis all in mercy—
Far deeper were thy pain
To know the journey over,
And still the load remain.

“ Thou *feel’st* the weight—be hopeful !
For while thou feelest, know
‘Twas love and mercy told thee
That thou wast laden so ;
Hence, they thy travel lengthen ;
For he who rest would win,
Must *lose* his load ere ever
He hope to look therein !”

Then ‘rose the stinging query :
Comes might of travelling *long*,
To do what mocked our powers
When life was young and strong ?
Oh, holy was the answer
That set the bearer free :
“ Behold *I* take the burden
“ Off him who taketh *me* !”

Speak on, O Voice of voices—
I know Thee by Thy power !
Through wilds of words I’ve wandered
Of grandest root and flower ;

Like birds of gaudy plumage
They passed on sounding wing,
While Thine so few and simple
Still through my spirit ring !

O Love of love the fountain—
Unspeakable—sublime !
Hast thou some chosen season—
Some holier point of time
Wherein to burst what bars thee
From many a laden heart,
To speak that such may hear Thee
And know Thee, whence Thou art ?

Ah, yes ! Thou hast a season—
A point of time decreed ;
'Tis when the tearful seeker
Perceiveth clear his need
Of something more than human
To sever death from crime,
And seeking, *wills* to win it—
Then, then's thy chosen time !

O Voice, so low and simple !
O Voice, so full of power !
Thy *words* I've often heard them,
But till this holy hour,
Thy *voice*, O wondrous Speaker,
Or distant, or disguised,
Had ne'er the living music
At present recognised.

So, hence from flowers faded
I'll lift unladen eyes—
Hence, from the fitful seasons,
I'll look to where they rise—
To where, without one shadow
Of winter, want, or sin,
The Source of all the summers
Awaits to take me in !

THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH.

Isaiah ix. 1-7.

ARISE and shine, thy light is come !
The glory of the Lord,
That thou no more shalt sever from,
Upon thy head is poured !
In darkness dense the earth shall groan—
Its people dark shall be ;
But from Jehovah-Jireh's throne
Shall glory stream on thee !

The Gentiles to thy light shall fly,
And kings thy brightness own ;
They come, they come ! Lift up thine eye—
They come, and not alone !
Thy sons to thee, their guiding star,
Shall haste as to a bride ;
Thy daughters, gathered from afar,
Shall nestle by thy side !

Then, seeing, shalt thou see and hear
Thine own together flow,
Till, lo ! thy heart shall shrink with fear
To be enlarged so !
Because the riches of the sea—
The Gentiles' wealth and power—
Shall be converted unto thee
In that all-hallowed hour !

The multitude of camels, tall,
With wealth shall wrap thee o'er ;
From Midian and from Ephah shall
The dromedaries pour ;
While they of Sheba here shall crowd
With gold and incense stored—
Till all shall sing, in anthems loud,
The praises of the Lord !

Behold, of Kedar's fairest lambs
 Thine offerings then shall be ;
 And fat Nebaoith's choicest rams
 Shall minister to thee !
 Yea, to Mine altar shall they hie,
 Accepted by these signs ;
 For I the House will glorify
 Wherein My glory shines !



THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH.

Isaiah ix. 8—14.

Ho ! who are these
 The Spirit sees,
 That fly as 'twere a cloud—
 As doves that towards their windows crowd,
 Heart sick from dreams of old home harmonies ;
 Yet still, with pinions proud,
 Smiting the steadfast breeze ?

Surely the isles that stud the sea
 Shall wait for me,
 And ships of Tarshish, first to bring to thee,
 Those deeply stricken ones,
 Thine exiled sons
 From lands that lounge afar—
 Each, like a frost-flamed star,
 Emitting radiance from a wealth untold—
 Yea, with them bringing silver and red gold
 From every sea and sod,
 Whither they have been cast abroad,
 Wild waifs acquaint with shame—
 Even to the name
 Of Him who is the Lord thy God ;
 Till joy, in depth, their deepest grief excel,
 Till pulse to pulse shall tell,
 Like the tender tink of a rock-born well,

The love of Him, their homeward Guide—

The Holy One of Israel !

Because He walketh by thy side—

Because He thee hath glorified !

And strangers' sons shall build thy walls,
And kings shall serve within thy halls ;
For, if thou, wandering from My path,
Wast smitten, it was in My wrath ;
But in My favour shalt thou know
My mercy worked through all thy woe !

Therefore, Thy gates shall open be
Both day and night continually,
That men may, from the utmost sea,
Hither the Gentile forces bring—

Yea, in a sweet captivity,
Shall king come humbly after king !

For the nations and kingdoms, unwise,
That thy right and thy rule may despise—
That refuse thee to honour and cherish—

Behold, they shall fall

As a leaf, one and all !

As a leaf by His breath they shall perish,
Shall perish !

Yea, stricken and blasted,

And utterly wasted,

That kingdom and nation shall perish !

Ho ! thou that art fair

As a star in the deep,

When the night and the winds

On the great waters sleep.

Thou art fruitful as fair,

And in many a tree

Shall the glory of Lebanon

Come unto thee !

The fir, too, and pine,

And the box shall be thine,

And bright shall the Home of My Holiness be—
Yea, the place of My feet shall be glorious to see !

And humble and haggard,
And trembling and dumb,
Before thee the sons
Of thy tyrants shall come !
And they who rejected thee,
Scorned and afflicted thee—

Treading thee, bleeding thee, when it seemed meet ;
Behold, they shall bow to the soles of thy feet !

And shall call thee, with wonder,
And wondrous accord,
The city of Beauty, of Love, of the Lord—
The city of Him who of Hosts is the Lord !

Place of Beauty ! Place of Joy !
'Neath a never waning sun
Thou shalt shine eternally ;
For the time of tears is by—
Yea, thy race of blood is run !
Peace with thee shall come and dwell—
Even now her reign's begun !
Peace it passeth tongue to tell.
Zion of the Holy One—
The Holy One of Israel !

THE GLORY OF THE CHURCH.

Isaiah lx. 15—22.

WHEREAS thou'st been forsaken,
And shunned and hated so,
That heads at thee were shaken
By passers to-and-fro—
That never man went through thee,
Nor deigned an eye to view thee,
Thou wast so very low !

Yet I shall make of thee
An all-eternal excellency—
Yea, even a light of many nations—
A joy to countless generations !

The milk of the Gentiles shall be thine ;
Thou shalt suck the breast of kings !
And thou shalt know by many a sign,
From my glory's thousand springs,
That I, the Lord, thy Saviour am—
Thy one Redeemer—yea,
The Mighty One of Jacob, whom
The nations shall obey—
The Mighty One of Jacob, whom
The Heaven of heavens obey !

For brass, I'll bring thee gold ;
For iron, silver white ;
For wood, the brass ; for stones, behold,
The iron in its might !
Thine officers, will I make peace ;
And thine exactors, righteousness !

With violence, oh ! nevermore
Shall thy fair land be gored ;
Nor wasting, nor destruction, o'er
Her beaming borders poured !
The song of joy shall fill thy halls,
And when its voice they raise,
“Salvation” shalt thou call thy walls—
Thy gates, thou'l't name them “Praise”—
Salvation's King,
Thy walls shall sing—
Thine every gate His praise !

The sun shall no more be thy light by day,
Nor her splendor,
Tender,

The moon give thee ;
For the Lord shall shine in an endless ray,

And the glory of God thy moon shall be—
 A sun that shall never know twilight shades,
 A moon that shall never at morning fade ;
 For the Lord, of light the Eternal Giver,
 Like a molten sun, till the heavens shall quiver,
 Shall flood thee with glory, as 'twere with a river :
 For night and thy tears shall have gone for ever !

Then righteousness shall walk the land,
 And righteousness alone !
 Her rule shall stretch from strand to strand,
 Both sea and soil her own,
 For ever, and for ever !
 The branch I planted, mine own hand,
 Like lilies by the river,
 Expanding, shall my light expand—
 A shadow knowing never !
 The branch I planted, mine own hand,
 A pleasant tree shall grow !
 And strong in mine own might to stand,
 With flower and fruit shall glow !
 My name shall in its leaves abide,
 That I may thus be glorified !

And a little one in thee,
 As a thousand shall he be ;
 And a small one in the light
 Of a new and holy might,
 Flash sublime,

As the sword.

Of a nation in her prime—
 Flash terribly sublime—

I'm the LORD !

I will haste it in his time—
 I the Lord !



CANTICLES ; OR, THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

Chap. i. 1-7.

LET Him kiss me, let Him kiss me,
With the kisses of His mouth,
For his bursting lip is glowing
With the glories of the south !
Oh ! the rosy wine is luscious,
In His chalices of gold ;
But His love to me is sweeter,
Yea, a thousand, thousand fold !
And the very *air* that dances
'Neath the numbers of His name,
Smites my soul with dreamy music,
And my heaving heart with flame.
For I love Him, yea, I love Him !
So that e'en His name shall be,
Like the breeze that hunts the odour
From some blossom-clouded tree,
To our heaven-hallowed temples,
To the virgins, and to me.

Do but lisp my name, my loved one ;
Yea, but breathe it, and we'll flee,
Like the flashing feet of morning,
O'er the hills to follow Thee.
Then the lone one shall be joyous,
In the chambers of her king !
Then the crimson roof shall quiver,
With the anthems we shall sing !
Then the tears of joy and gladness
O'er my love-lit cheek shall roll,
Till the marble 'neath me glisten,
With a very sea of soul !
Oh ! we will, we will remember,
More than e'en the ripened shine
Of the vineyard's ruddy glory,
All that deep, deep love of Thine :
How the holy hearts adore Thee,
Purest, dearest, hope of mine !

Though a midnight blackness sleepeth
O'er the dimples on my cheek,
I am comely, yea, I'm comely—
 Speak, Jerusalem's daughters, speak !
Though you've seen the tents of Kedar
 Frowning darkly on your view,
Think what glories track the tempest
 When he walks his native blue.
And frown ye not upon me,
 For the rivulets that run
From a rock of veiling blackness
 May be crystal in the sun !
Can the ray that stains the bosom
 Change the heart beneath to stone ?
Does Thine eye, beloved one, sicken
 At the curtains o'er thy throne ?
Then surpassing those in beauty
 Is the spirit of thine own.

Then look ye not upon me
 With the heart-blight in your eyes,
Though the children of my mother
 Made a mockery of my sighs,
Yea, and drove me, in my sorrow,
 Where the yellow floods of light
Rushed around my fever'd forehead,
 Till it withered in their sight !
For they made me, yea, they made me
 Be a keeper of the vine,
Till the burning brow of heaven
 Flung a blackness over mine !
And the glowing grape I nurtur'd,
 And each infant tendril kept,
When the moonlit world was dreaming,
 And the stars of heaven slept,
And for Thee, my soul's beloved,
 Through the long night watched and wept !

Then Thou, who in the chambers
 Of my stricken soul dost dwell,
 Like the glowing glance of heaven
 Dancing through some dreary dell ;
 Wilt Thou tell me, dearest, tell me,
 Where, beneath the golden glare
 Of the noontide's peerless glory,
 Stray the nurselings of Thy care ?
 Where Thou leadest, where Thou feedest,
 Where Thou lullest them to rest,
 With the sun of softest feeling,
 Burning, breathing in Thy breast ?
 For, oh ! should I, Thine own one,
 Turn her lonely feet aside,
 By the flocks of those who wander
 Where the unveiled daughters glide,
 Where the breath of love were *poison*
 To thy wayworn weeping bride !

—————

“T H O U A R T T H E M A N .”

2nd Kings, chap. xii., verse 7.

OH ! the seer little recked all the gloss and the glare
 Of the gold, of the purple, or chrysolite's sheen,
 For his heart lay embalmed by the spirit of prayer,
 And his soul through the odours broke proudly serene ;
 And the prophet-anointed addresseth the throne,
 That is dark with the blood of the lowly and lone,
 And the weight on his soul trembles forth through
 each tone,
 As his words had been thoughts steeped for ages in tears :
 “ Oh ! the peace of Jehovah from David hath flown,
 If He sit by His servant and ope not His ears,
 To the woe and the wail,
 That give life to my tale,
 To a crime, by each pulse in our nature abhorred ;
 To a crime, that for vengeance, by curse and by sword,
 Even now at the Holy of Holies appears.

Know thou, then, Israel's King, in the face of thy God—
 Yea, and in thine own city, there wantons a man,
 Who arose from the dust at our Holy One's nod,
 And from splendour to splendour careeringly ran ;
 For the Mighty who moves 'twixt the bright
 cherubim,
 Set His signet of glory distinctly on him ;
 Gave him wealth in his hand, gave him might in
 his limb,
 To be lordly and great, and revered in the land ;
 Yea, and hopes through the Heaven of heavens to
 swim ;
 Gave him maidens, wives, vassals, and slaves at command,
 Gave him pastures and herds,
 To outnumber my words—
 How the Holy One blessed him, yea, *blessed* him—for
 what ?
 To oppress the oppressed—ah ! my soul, surely not,
 Such a goblet of glory should hallow the hand.
 Did it so?—let us see. In this city obscure
 Dwelt another as worthy, as worthy could be,
 But the mighty despised him because he was poor,
 For, save one little lamb, nothing worthy had he :
 One dear little lamb—'twas a sweet little ewe—
 And its bleat was like song, as its fleece was like snow,
 And its eye was the sun, that a halo did throw
 O'er the gloom of his youth and the path of his goal,
 And the beat of its foot, but the lover can know
 How the music thereof through his musings did roll,
 How it eat of his meat,
 (How it played at his feet,)
 By his children caressed, by his spirit adored,
 In his *bosom* embraced as a gift of the Lord ;
 Ah ! that lamb, we might say, was like part of his soul !
 Thus it was—be it so—but behold thou, my King,
 To our grasper of thousands a traveller came,
 And his heart must be glad, and a feast we must bring—
 It will fix a new key to the bugle of fame !

Oh ! we oft leave the sun for the *shadow* of might—
But the stranger must eat, such our host doth delight ;
Don't his flocks hide the green of the vales from
our sight.

It will be but as taking one flake from the snow
(When each mountain groans under a helmet of
white)

To consume at each revel a thousand or so.

And the proud one shall slay,
For his banquet to-day ;—

He shall slay ! Nay, he *slew*—yea, but what, Israel's
King ?

Was't the fat of his flocks ? No ; the poor bleating thing
Of pale poverty's bosom, that loved little ewe.

As the golden-winged morn its young plumage doth shed
Through the broad cedar ringlets on Lebanon's brow,
Till each wrinkle is wrapped in a turban of red,

So, the crimson of wrath sheets the fallen one now !
And he sware to the prophet, as liveth the Lord,
Hath that reptile a heart, it shall pant on our sword,
And the feast that unhallowed his banqueting board.

As the Holy One liveth to aid me, I swear,
Even fully fourfold shall the thing be restored,
To the bosom he robbed without pity to spare.

Oh ! the soul that could feed,
On so bloody a deed,

Can our nature be banned with so loathsome a blight ;
Then away ! for as liveth the Lender of light,
With the plunderer's pity we'll pity his prayer.

Oh ! the heart of that seer and his might to control,
Was it only man's nature that stood in its guise,
When the vengeance of heaven seemed locked in his soul,
And convulsively seeking a path through his eyes :
Till, “ O ! fallen of Israel—THOU ART THE MAN ! ”
Spake the seer, “ Or Urias, where, where hath he
gone ?
Lo ! his soul from a temple, rent, shatter'd and wan,

Crieth, woe to thine house, thou successor of Saul ;
 By the sword of the heathen thus David hath done,
 And the idols of Ammon are raised in his fall !

Oh ! the star of thy might
 Shrinks away from my sight,
 For the Lord hath declared that the spear of thy foe
 Shall encompass thine house till no lamp shall it show,
 Save the flash of his sword gleaming over each hall."

Then the heart of the monarch groaned up at his lips,
 Till his visage waxed white as the fleece on the shoal :
 And in sinking, each heave showed the fearful eclipse ;
 That the angel of anguish had fixed on his soul.

And the Holy of Israel pitied that woe,
 For the spirit sank faint, *not in dread* of the blow !
 'Twas the blackness of crime that had darkened it
 so,

That to eye of repentance rose deeper in hue,
 Till the fallen, rent, melted, and prostrate, and low,
 Caught the broad beam of pardon each cloud bursting
 through.

Thus—as day slayeth night,
 With his first spear of light,
 Though the blackness may strain with the brightness
 awhile—

Keep thine eye to the cloud, and thy soul to the toil,
 And Jehovah, though *just*, will be MERCIFUL too !

NOW.

"Now is the accepted time."—2 Cor. vi. 2.
 "And what I say unto you, I say unto all—WATCH!"—Mark xiii. 87.

BE up—and on the watch !
 The Master may be near !
 The thought, unuttered, catch
 Some passing angel's ear,

May now be on His way
That angel, *not* unknown,
Who cometh when He may—
Who goeth *not* alone !

Oh, if His hour be dim,
'Tis not that we should grieve ;
But strew the way for Him—
Not blindly—*madly* leave
The flowers of joy and peace—
The Spirit's pleading cry,
Till every sound may cease—
Till woeful “ By-and-bye ! ”

Ah, when the heart is wrung—
When thought, itself, is slain—
When paralyzed the tongue,
By burning, breathless pain ;
When all the prostrate power
A *sigh* could scarce essay—
Oh, what a hopeless hour
To seek “ The Life and Way ! ”

A fearless hour to pore
O'er sins a life-time broad !
To think that time's *no more*—
That hearing heard not God !
Oh, while the voice is strong,
Be this the grand sublime
Of every sinner's song—
“ The *Now's* the accepted time ! ”

And when the head lies low,
And when each dying power
Is driven to and fro,
Through many an anguished hour,
The Lord—the listening Lord—
Who bends to prayerful men—
Shall each appealing word
Remember for us then !

O, Thou Almighty One—
 Adored, Eternal Three !
 We know the bleeding Son—
 Though *dark*, and *worse*, we be—
 Before the throne, with joy,
 If but in *faith* we bow,
 Shall crown us while we cry—
 “ Dear Lord, accept us Now ! ”



THE SAVING FAITH.

“ Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”—*Mark x. 15.*

“ For we walk by faith, not by sight.”—*2 Cor. v. 7.*

Oh, for the faith of childhood’s years,
 At once so bold and meek,
 That even in midnight dreams it hears
 The very God-man speak !

Oh, for a dream of long-ago—
 ’Twas up a green hill side,
 In brightness God alone could show,
 Walked Jesus as my guide !

Oh, for the fear and hate of hell
 Which thrilled that dreaming hour,
 When Satan seemed adown the dell
 A darkly skulking power !

Oh, for the promise made me there—
 ’Twas sought on bended knee !—
 “ Fear not ! I’ll be thy shield whene’er
 The fiend would injure thee ! ”

Oh, for that dream—that *childish* dream
 Through years of gloom and guile,
 It cheered my darkness, like a beam
 From Christ’s protecting smile !

Oh, for the dreams we babes despise,
When grown beyond the rod—
The *foolish* things wherewith the wise
Confounded are by God !

How many a weary hill, since then,
In search of broader beams,
I climbed, as well as wiser men,
In wildly wakeful dreams !

But never shone the ray so sweet,
As yon bright vision bore,
Till knelt I at my Saviour's feet—
A little child once more !

Oh, for the wisdom of the child,
Since man's so oft is vain !—
Yea, welcome dreams, however wild,
If with them, Christ again !

O Holy Spirit, lift our eyes,
Till simple faith may see
No mists of godless Reason rise
Betwixt our souls and Thee !

LOVE'S PROMISES.

"This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord"—*Isaiah* liv. 17.

THOUGH poor and mean, and vile beside,
Yet I've a prospect fair ;
For, oh, there's One, whose love I've tried,
Hath wonders still to spare :
A crown—a throne—and robes of snow,
And claim to kingly line ;
And I have but to *ask*, I know,
Till all this wealth be mine !
 O, sin and shame !
 O, blind and lame !

Shall darkness, dust and pride
 E'er shine as snow ?
 He promised so,
 Who never—never lied !

He promised so—Love promised so !
 O, Saviour—Saviour dear !
 O'er all our clanging cares below
 That promise ringeth clear ;
 But while Thy Life-stream pulseth through
 Thy love so strangely deep,
 What can I do—could any do,
 But bow the head and weep !
 O, loving Lord !
 O, tortured Lord !
 O, Father—Brother—Thou,
 Our bleeding Lamb—
 Our great “I AM”—
 I well may weep and bow !

May weep, dear Lord, that guilt alone
 Thy recompense can be !
 My floweriest thanks were not my own—
 Their germs must come from Thee !
 “Give Me thy heart !” methinks I hear
 The suffering Saviour say—
 My heart of guile ! O Saviour dear,
 Wash Thou that guile away !
 Then heart and soul,
 Oh, take the whole !
 All vileness though they be
 They'll shine as Thou,
 Yea, even now,
 If breathed upon by Thee !

Our earth, O Lord, all flowery fair,
 Rolls through Thy wondrous blue ;
 The sweetness here—the brightness there,
 Thy love makes wondrous, too !

Then shine and sing, ye moon and stars !
Breathe music, oh, ye flowers,
Till spirits through their prison bars,
With spirit's holiest powers,
 Shall sound afar,
 How love, His war
With hell and hate began,
 And bore and bled,
 Till Death lay dead,
And LOVE rose LIFE for man !

MAN OF SORROWS.

I DREAMT, and lo, a spacious plain
Whereon for years my way had lain,
With golden grain it seemed to shine,
But not an ear methought was mine.

And noble trees were also there,
Whose fruit with fragrance filled the air,
But all so girt with gate and band,
The tempting fruits but mocked my hand.

But strange to say, each morning there
My scrip was filled with wholesome fare,
And stranger still, I never tried
To know who thus my wants supplied.

But day by day my course I sped,
Without a thought for where it led,
My spirits high—my scrip not low—
Of little else I cared to know.

At length I reached a city fair,
Where met me men of solemn air,
Who bound and led me forth to die,
Because so travel-stained was I !

Oh, stained indeed, for grief to say
I'd foully trifled by the way,
Yea, lolled where soul and sense were pained,
What wonder that my robe was stained.

Then lo ! a man of beauteous mien,
Whom somewhere I methought had seen,
Between them and their captive stept,
Beheld me and, beholding, wept.

He'd known me long, I heard him say,
Had watched with grief my reckless way,
And now that I his truth might see,
He—if I *willed*—would die for me !

I fell before him as he spoke,
And as I fell my bands were broke,
His feet seemed streaked with crimson light,
I touched and, lo, my robe grew white.

He dried my tears. Behold, said he,
Since thou hast *willed* *I've bled* for thee,
He oped my eyes, 'twas He I knew,
Had filled my scrip the journey through.

My dream was o'er, with joy I woke,
And thus the midnight silence broke,
O blessed dream, whereby I see
The Man of Sorrows *bled* for ME !



A S H O R T A P P E A L.

LORD, leave me not to walk by sight,
But grant me faith as well ;
For in a world of dark and bright
It may not, cannot still be light
When waters round us swell.

Oh, in Thy love, Almighty Lord—
 For blessed Jesu's sake—
 Grant me to rest upon Thy word,
 To trust the light within it stored,
 Till endless day shall break.

Then, narrow be the gulf or wide ;
 The ford be deep or shoal ;
 Thy Holy Spirit for my guide,
 However rude may roll the tide,
 It ne'er shall touch my soul.



MY FATHER STILL.

THROUGH many a dark and evil scene,
 Oh Lord, a wanderer I have been ;
 But with me still such glimpse of light
 As made me dread eternal night ;
 Till lo ! at length that fitful gleam
 Became a fixed and beauteous beam,
 That showed me Thou, through good and ill,
 Had been, O Lord, my Father still !

That showed me that, and so much more,
 I loved not what I loved before ;
 But warfare with the flesh to wage,
 My spirit went on pilgrimage,
 And seemed an angel form to meet,
 With bleeding hands and bleeding feet,
 From whom she learned, on Calvary Hill,
 How God had been my Father still.

My Father ? Oh, mysterious love ;
 Can He, who formed those orbs above ;
 Who broadcast sows, before my face,
 With shining worlds, yon fields of space ?
 Can He behold each guilty one,
 And, spite of vileness, name him son ?

Yea, looking up from deadliest ill,
That mighty God's his Father still.

My Father still ? Oh, can our tears,
The crown of thorns we've worn for years,
The death-bed partings—anguish sore—
When those we loved are seen no more—
Can these be only meant to prove
The richness of a Father's love ?
Ah, sinner, learn from Calvary Hill
Our God's the sufferer's Father still.

His Father ! Oh, that way of grief ;
My Father ! Oh, that sweet relief—
That heavenly beam, whereby we prove
The way of grief is one of love.
That beam, revealed by Gospel truth,
Whereat my soul renewed her youth
In finding how, through good and ill,
My God had been my Father still.



S T . M A R Y ' S H A L L ,

BELFAST.

Oh, Martyr Queen, whose meek demands,
Unfolding Mercy's wing,
All mutely move the Almighty hands
Of heaven's Eternal King !
Behold ! we seek thy holiest prayer
That this, our work, begun ;
May know henceforth the keep and care
Of thy sweet Saviour Son.
Oh, white, white moon, for all our dark
O'er which thou deignest to shine,
May thy sweet light
Entreat, this night,
That Saviour Son of thine !

May Jesus nurse within these walls,
 Which to thy name we raise,
 What yet may shine through starry halls
 To our GREAT FATHER's praise ;
 And streaming, like the HOLY DOVE,
 With light thy suffrage won,
 Reveal the yearnings of thy love
 For God's ETERNAL SON.
 O, white, white moon ! O, prayerful light !
 For Ireland's sainted rod,
 Implore thy Son,
 The HOLY ONE,
 Our JESUS and our GOD.
 And oh, when far, far from these halls,
 And cold to faith and prayer,
 Some frailer soul their meed recalls
 On life's wild thoroughfare,
 Till trembling 'neath his faults and fears,
 His erring path re-trod,
 He, kneeling, seeks, with groans and tears,
 His SAVIOUR and his GOD !
 Ah, then, dear moon, let through his dark
 Some earlier beamlet fall,
 And pray the *meed*
Recalled, may plead
 With HIM who died for all !

THE MERITS OF PRAYER

(NOT TO BE OVERRATED).

When we become strong, in bodily health, our piety sometimes leave us—Lord,
 let not our bodily health rob our souls of their salvation. Grant us to watch
 and pray.

ALMIGHTY King, whom thus before
 My subject spirit leans :
 Still grant me grace to pray, and more,
 To know what praying means ;

To know 'tis good in weal or woe,
 To seek Thy shielding wing ;
 But ne'er to dream my seeking so
 The *one* all-saving thing.

A beggar, prostrate at Thy gate,
 By nature blind and bare ;
 What glory to my God's estate
 Can issue from my prayer ;
 My prayer that springs from self alone,
 Or what my wants have taught,
 What beauty brings it to His throne,
 By either word or thought.

Yea, even such as bringeth he,
 Who holds his shivering palms,
 My needier brother, suing me
 For some poor earthly alms.

No honours meet me from his whine,
 While thus his needs implore—
 Oh, such my Lord from me and mine
 When bowing Thee before.

Still teach my soul to know, O Lord !
 How good it is to pray,
 That I may feel from thought and word
 How poor am I alway.
 Oh ! more—that through such converse sweet
 Those living links that bind
 My spirit to Thy mercy-seat
 May never be disjoined.

THE THREE VIRGINS.

Matt. xxv. 1—14.

THEN Heaven's kingdom shall be like
 Ten virgins, fair and fleet,
 Who rose, and took their lamps, and forth
 The bridegroom went to meet ;

And five thereof were wise, and five
To foolishness were prone—
The wise took oil within their lamps,
The foolish virgins, none.

And while the bridegroom tarried, so
They slumbered all and slept,
Until behold a sudden cry
Along the midnight swept—
The bridegroom cometh!—rise and haste
The marriage train to meet!
The ten go forth—but five, alas,
With dark and tardy feet.

Oh stay and share your oil, they cried,
Our lamps are dark and dry;
Not so—not so, the wise replied—
To those who sell go buy:
We only have to serve our wants,
The midnight travel through,
And should we share it, needs must be
We walk in darkness too!

But, while they went to buy, behold
The wise ones' watch is o'er:
The Bridegroom comes—they enter in,
And straight He shuts the door!
And now the other virgins come
With pleading knock and word—
Lord, open—open Thou the door—
O, open to us, Lord!

But, straightway answered He—Not so;
Your hour of grace is by—
I know you not—the door is shut,
And shall be verily.
Watch, therefore, for the day or hour
Ye can nor name nor know,
Wherein shall come the Son of Man
To fix your weal or woe.

C O N T E N T .

Hebrews xiii. 5-7.

HOWEVER dark or bright the way
 Your pilgrim feet may tread,
 Oh let Content's subliming ray
 O'er flower or flint be shed.
 Nor grieve thee if by day or night
 Another's path thou see,
 With earthly glory made more bright
 Than that allotted thee.

Nor doubt the love of Him who spake
 From glory's highest throne—
 I'll never leave thee, nor forsake
 Whom I have made My own !
 Hence raise your voices full and clear
 Whate'er the woe in view,
 "The Lord's my Helper—I'll not fear
 What man to me can do !"



H E A L I N G W A T E R S .

Isaiah, chap. xii.

AND in that bright day which cometh
 As adown the dark sublime,
 From the golden fount of morning
 Gush the diamond drops of time.
 Thou shalt say, O my Redeemer,
 Though I long an errant dreamer,
 Warped me from Thy sacred care,
 So I from the shackles springing
 Towards Thee, look with praises singing,
 Holy, Holy, Holy, Jah !
 Therefore, thou, with exultation
 From the well-springs of salvation
 Shall the healing waters draw !

Yea, O Lord my God, I'll praise Thee,
Thou in ecstacy shall say,
For though angry wast Thou with me
While I wandered far astray,
Since Thy righteous wrath departed
I, no more the broken-hearted,
Darken in the light of day—
Pale beneath the blush of day:
For as morn amongst the flowers,
Where in grief and gloom they lay,
Till the golden-hooded hours
Linked the moping mists away,
And the dew-clouds slumberous showers
Shone as gold and purple spray,
And a glory walked the bowers
Like the glory maketh May,
So thine eye of melting ray—
Of the loving, living ray—
Hath my soul made bright as they.
Therefore ye who so much sorrow,
In the ray of darkness saw
With exceeding exultation,
From the fountains of salvation
Shall the living waters draw !

For behold the God who walketh
The eternal *now* along,
Upon whose piercing vision
The ordered eyeless throng.
With every veiled moment
That lurketh them among—
The mighty God who moulded
From night and nothingness,
In glory and in terror,
The mountain and abyss,
Who built the blue above us,
The beaming worlds thereon,
Yea, all the secret heavens
Beyond the gaze of man—

Though I in my darkness grieved Him,
Doubted, shunned, and disbelieved Him—
 Linked my soul to every wrong.
Lo, the night wherein He found me,
Made He light and beauty round me.
 And to music wed my tongue.
 Oh, I'll trust and shall not fear,
 For the Lord Jehovah, near,
 Hath become my refuge strong—
 Even such shall be thy song !
Oh, here with joy, with bounding joy,
 As ne'er before ye saw—
Every heart a new creation,
From the well-springs of salvation
 Shall ye healing waters draw !
That day of radiance cometh,
 And therein shall ye say
Praise the Lord, the God of Jacob,
 Calling on His name alway—
Declare His wondrous doings
 For peoples long astray,
Tell to earth and tell to Heaven
 How the dungeon gates are riven
 That had shut us from the day.
Tell the earth the tale of wonder,
Till the clouds loose forth their thunder,
Shouting might and mercy wedded,
And no more to part asunder.
 Shall the seed of Jacob see—
Might and mercy wedded ever,
Like a world-encircling river,
From His throne who shall for ever
 More and more exalted be !
Therefore, ye, who so much sorrow
 In the day of darkness saw,
With exceeding exultation
From the fountains of salvation,
 Shall the living waters draw !



The Light Across the Cloud.

INSCRIBED TO THE REV. COLOMBAN O'GRADY,
ST. PAUL'S RETREAT, MOUNT ARGUS, DUBLIN.

PART I.

THE six weeks' snow had left the vale ;
The gray moon glanced o'er swollen rills ;
The sky was flanked with tower and isle
Of dusky cloud, in many a pile,
And tempests howled amongst the hills.

Two leagues from where the city lamps,
With shimm'ring silver, pierced the flood,
A cottage 'rose behind the down—
A queenly thing, with oaten crown,
And vesture white as wheaten food.

The wild winds lash'd the cottage walls ;
The darkness thickened through their din ;
But calm and clear the wooded peat
Lay, reddening, at the inmates' feet—
'Twas war without, but peace within !

There sat a group—a group of five :
Two damsels, and an aged pair ;
A little maid, some four years old,
Who, through a cloud of curling gold,
Sat smiling by the old man's chair.

And still old Dearmid clasped his palms,
And gazed upon the little maid ;
The matron wound upon a reel ;
The elder damsel plied a wheel ;
The younger housewife art essay'd.

And oft the worn old woman's eye
Was cast upon the window-pane :
It seemed, in sooth, she turned aside
To drop the tear she sought to hide,
While "check," the reel struck out again.

A *skirl*, and now the little clock
Its mimic cuckoo holds in ken,
Till, bowing, in the spring bird's note,
The dainty thing of speckled throat
Has counted o'er the hour of "ten !"

A table, placed beside the fire,
Has signall'd wheel and reel away ;
The little maiden grasps the light,
With, "I—I'll fetch the book to-night—
Eh—gran-da?—Eh?" "My Bird, you may !

He scans the book in out-shot hand ;
A sudden tremour smites his breast,
While low and calm, he murmured, "This!"
And then a swift and stealthy kiss
Upon the crumpled thing he press'd !

He searched the soiled and tiny page—
Its "*nonpareil*" but mocked his eye ;
While, 'midst a flash of tearful looks,
The matron seized *her* "Book of books,"
And in the window dropt it by.

Another volume bows their souls
Before the Cross of Him adored !
And now, like airs that kiss the sod,
That little, lonely flock of God
Its *offerings* whisper to the Lord !

Far up the night, the ROSARIE
From blast to blast was Heavenward tost ;
Till lowlier bowed, the hoary man,
In broken, whispering voice, began :
“ O, MARY, pray for *her* that’s lost !”

The wild winds lashed the cottage walls,
And crashing flew the window pane !
And, oh, that night ! so wild, so dark !
It seemed as if no starry spark
Could live through such a weight of rain !

With streaming eyes the flock arise—
But wherefore stares the gray old man ?
That book thou broughtest, little maid—
So lately in the window laid—
It is not there !—the book is gone !

The white old woman, shrieking, rose,
And wildly glanced a moment round :
“ Sweet Saviour ! who can tell ?” she cries,
“ It may be uttered in the skies :
‘ Our lost —*my* lost —‘ may yet be found ! ”

The wild winds lashed the cottage walls,
And smote the ear with fearful tone ;
The sisters start, in staring fright :
“ Sweet Son of God ! rebuke this night,
That blast’s so *human* in its moan ! ”

P A R T II.

The city clock has long since told
In fitful notes the midnight hour ;
The brick-and-mortar forests, where
Our human tigers find their lair,
Are wailing ‘neath the tempest’s power.

Within a shattered, darksome den,
A dozen wretches, drenched and grim,
Are yelling forth, in drunken glee,
Some ill-begotten melody,
Yet shivering, shivering, heart and limb !

Oh, Father of the feeling hearts—
Creator of the gentle hands—
Can these be women ? women !—oh !
Can ever, ever fall so low—
That glory in the darkest lands ?

Yes ! they are women—SISTERS ! Lord,
Not we, but Thou, should'st dare to blame !
These daughters of the darker mind—
These bleeding wastrels of our kind—
Can *we* be shameless in *their* shame ?

We may not search Thy secret laws,
Nor know why Thou permittest thus !
They *are*—Thou *art*, great Lord of All !
And if *we* stand while others fall,
Dear Father ! is't from aught in us ?

How often lies the *strength* we boast,
But in the *weakness* of our foe !
The oak may toss its brawny arms,
And vaunt—“ I've braved a thousand storms,
And never one hath laid me low !”

'Tis *more or less* than tree or leaf,
That never shook in gale or show'r !
And faintest curve of leaf or tree
Is Heaven's own tale of what might be
Beneath the blast of fitting pow'r !

Oh, human weakness—human strength—
In both, how much of human guile !
Let's, grasping God's restraining grace,
Go, weeping, to our sister's face,
With—“ Come to Christ, we *all* are vile !”

The sinful melody has ceased,
The gentlest of the herd are laired ;
“ But ”—snatching up the quivering light—
One mutters, “ Where’s our Chief to-night ?
Where’s Captain Nell, the yellow-haired ?”

The words were on the speaker’s tongue
When sharply shot aside the door,
And there, in fitful loveliness—
In tattered robe and dripping tress—
A woman trod the creaking floor.

She moved in grace—in beauty strange,
By passion seared, but not consumed ;
A daisy, scathed by cities’ breath—
A gleam of life in worse than death—
Entombed, and yet—not *all* entombed !

“ Give place !” she spake, “ What, then ! no fire !
And such a night—so wet, so cold !”
“ The same all round ! But sit thee, lass !
There ! like a good ‘un, stand a glass !—
At worst, you’re worth your weight in gold !”

It were not wise—it were not well—
To chase them through their wilds of words !
In ones and twos they slink away,
While one grim whisperer, “ Captain ! stay !
For you and I must measure swords !

“ So—Nelly ! Now, that we’re alone,
Cheer up, ou’d lass—there’s something yet !”
Then drew a bottle from her gown,
And pulled the ’rising shiverer down,
And, to her lips, the madner get.

The liquor flashed along her veins,
And burst the bridle of her speech ;
“ Well, sister Moll, the other night
You gave your tale ; and now—I might—
But, hoot !—I’ve not been called to preach !”

“ Well, no!—not yet! Thy orders, lass,
Are not quite holy!—chaff-and-straw!
There! sit thee, wench, and give us thine—
I guess your tale: ‘tis much like mine—
These false young men! Ha-ha! Ha-ha!”

“ At fifteen years—that’s five ago!—
I walked—a rose, ‘mong *nettles* grown—
I walked, a vain conceited thing,
And fancied that some Eastern king
Must come, and choose me for his throne!

“ I threw myself on higher paths;
For—though I feared—ay, *loathed*, to sin—
Some frenzy whispered in my ear:
‘ Look up! You’re formed for other sphere!
And, where you charm, you’re *sure* to win!’

“ Alas!—But, there! squeeze out that grape!
That’s it!—Well, lass, the tempter came—
He brought the *cross*, but *not* the *crown*,
He filched the *rose*—kiss’d—flung it down—
The *nettles* would not brook the shame!

“ ‘Tis true, my mother pleaded long—
I see old father’s ghastly grin—
‘ From bad to worse!—The tinselled rag!
My lamb’s disgraced!—ashamed to beg!
She was not, then, *ashamed to sin*!’

“ So, I—a lass, of scarce sixteen—
Took forth my infant—greeting, sore!
But, when that babe was twelve months old,
I shore away this leaf of gold,
And left my flower at grandda’s door!”

A slender ring of sunny hair,
From somewhere near her heart, she drew;
She spread it on her cloudy palm,
And murmured, “ Vile, as *vile* I am,
I had been viler, but for you!

“ My flower—my *flower*!—my *child*!—my own !

I knew my father’s heart, within—
My mother’s—ay, my sisters’, too—
The blessed four, I knew—I knew !

My *child* was safe—it knew no sin !

“ That bottle, girl, ’s a noble priest—

You hear it ?—Well, but honour bright !
I joined our daughters of the moon,
And danced to many a bitter tune,
But—ne’er to such as one to-night !

“ Six months ago I ventured back,

From three years’ wand’ring here-and-there,
And, through the storm, this withering night,
I stole—and saw !—ay, *such a sight* !

God help us, child ! *where are we—where ?*

ALL RIGHT !—The times, you know, are dull !

I thought I’d try what could be done :
I knew where father kept his store—
I knew the secret of the door—
And, when they’d sleep ! Why—all were won !”

“ Brave Nell ! and did the work with pluck !”

“ Be quiet, girl ! ’Twas *all* a miss !
I quailed not at my mother’s face—
My *infant’s smile*—my sisters’ grace,
But trembled at the sight of *this* !”

“ Pooh—but a book !” “ Ah, but *such* pray’rs—
For one whose ‘ tower is in the sands !’

I think I shed a tear or so—
I cannot say, but this I know :
I staggered, and put forth my hands !

The window crashed ! They blamed the blast ;
I looked, and saw the broken pane :

I stretched my fingers—touched and grasped—
I drew them forth, when, thus, they clasped
My dear old Manual once again !

" Well—never mind ! It may amuse—
 May, sometime, cheer us with a flame !—"
 They rose—retired, and, when unrest,
 Took hands, and humm'd a horrid jest,
 Set, *vilely*, in a song-work frame ?

PART III.

THE battle-minstrel of the months,
 O'er February MARCHED his heel ;
 And, through the leafless tree and lanes,
 He whirled those wild volcanic strains,
 Whose every note seems edged with steel !

Anon, he hums a softer air—
 A gentler breathing, moistened, so,
 That weather-sages could not say,
 About the dropping of that day,
 What morn would bring them—rain or snow !

And yet the spacious fields of heaven
 Were flowered at dusk with starry crowds,
 That soon were darked with ebon bars—
 The clouds were walling up the stars—
 The moon was wading through the clouds.

It froze at five ; at eight, the hills,
 In bridal vestures, shine and soar ;
 At nine, the snow is two-feet deep—
 Oh ! many a heart has gone to sleep,
 Since such a March was here before !

Old Dearmid eyed his cottage roof,
 And hoped its timbers might not strain !
 He half-way ope'd the creaking door—
 A white ridge leaped across the floor—
 He dared not ope' that door again !

“ It may not be, good sir, to-night !
 Remain with us till morning come—
 With homely fare, and homely talk,
 And with the homeliest of your flock,
 You may not feel as *all* from home !”

The reverend man to whom he spake,
 On holy work had been abroad ;
 “ From home, old friend ?” and caught his hand—
 “ Beneath a brother’s roof I stand,
 And fare with him is fare from God !”

The supper o’er, the evening prayers
 Are whispered through with trembling care ;
 Till, lo, the CHURCH’s sacred mine
 Is opened by the wrapt Divine,
 And shows there’s *one grand need* in pray’r !

“ Our eyes are dim ! we cannot see
 What death may cloak in our demands :
 The infant eyes the flowered abyss,
 And starting with a pleading kiss,
 He pouteth—Father ! loose my hands !

“ Leave all to Him who knoweth”—Hush !
 What faintly smiteth, now and then,
 As if some sickly infant gale
 Had caught the window with a wail,
 And, dying, hymned a low “ Amen !”

“ Thou, Father, know’st our *real* wants—
 Thou knowest, also, our desires :
 Oh ! grant the first, and, for the rest—
 Not what *we will*, but what is *best*,
 On each bestow as each requires !

“ Yet, though we feel Thy children’s weal
 Is sacred in Thy sacred sight,
 Lord ! bear with us—who are but clay—
 If, from our anguished souls we pray,
 That those—the worse than dead, to-night,

“ The shame and error of their way
May, through Thy mercy, come to see—
May, from the furnace-blast of crime,
And in our own short grasp of time,
Be yet restored to CHRIST and THEE !”

The good man ceased. A prattling shock,
Of mimic thunder, smote each brain:
The cottage-roof had shed its snow,
Which, falling, 'rose a ridge below,
And wall'd the window's highest pane.

And thence arose a slender wail—
Slender and stifled, like the blast,
That having scaled some neighbouring tower,
And spent on many a chink its power,
Through one small cranny sobs its last.

“ Be Heaven praised—the winds are out !
This snow is *not* a snow to lie !”
“ The *winds* !” exclaimed the man of God,
As from the hearth he burst abroad,
“ 'Twas never *wind* had such a sigh !”

The fallen snow at last is gained—
'Twas little touched, or more than neared,
When peering through the fleecy hill,
And locked against the window-sill,
A lifeless female head appeared.

A mattress by the cottage hearth,
The still cold tattered thing receives—
“ So young ! so fair ! so friendless ! Look !
Those bleeding feet ! And, lo !—a book !—
Her fingers *glued* betwixt the leaves !

That book ! that face ! Hush, mother's heart !
Stone white, the mother starts and stands—
Now, in the frenzy of despair,
She battles with her thin, gray hair—
Now wrings her madness through her hands.

“ My fallen cherub ! flower of flowers !
Yon *angel*, prattling on my knee !
The heartless world may shower its blame ! ”
“ True mother, yes ! Through guilt or shame
Thy child is still as babe to thee ! ”

“ Oh, for the music of that voice !
One little word, and then ! and *then* !
Oh ! Thou that feltst our human woe—
Whose blood can make us white as snow—
Whose love surpasseth tongue or pen—

Is there no hope, no mercy left ? ”
Beneath the kneeling mother’s hand
That wayward heart is throbbing still ;
And now a little start or thrill !—
The sap still curdles in the brand !

A little while and Nelly lives ;
And Nelly gathers strength and speaks :
“ My book, my manual’s lost ! ” she says—
My little book of *other days*—
I’ve worn it now so many weeks ! ”

“ Your book, my Nelly darling ’s safe !
And so are you, and so are we :
Our Holy Shepherd sleepeth not,
Nor is his lowliest lamb forgot,
However strange its pastures be ! ”

PART IV.

A molten moonbeam, down the slope,
The thread of water “ tinks ” along,
Till, panting through its shimm’ring sides—
Its music growing as it glides—
The stream hath one unbroken song.

So Nelly's voice was faint at first—
 Broken and faint, and sad to hear ;
But, while her mother chafed her feet,
 Her heart struck out a larger beat—
 Her tale a oneness on the ear :

“ Six weeks, or more, have passed since I—
 The stoniest thing where all was stone—
Sat shivering o'er the empty grate—
 The night was darker than my fate—
 Sat shivering—hungry and alone !

“ Oh, for a little breath of warmth !
 I groped and, from its hiding place,
Produced the making of a flame—
 The Book whose name, *I* should not name !—
 And plucked the cover from God's grace !

“ And, while that blazed before my eyes,
 I turned a page, and saw, and read
A prayer I said so oft with you—
 I rose—I reeled—fell—sat, and through
 The broken lattice raised my head !

“ A black—black cloud rode o'er the sky—
 The moon—a slender bow of light,
Hung o'er one lonely little star,
 And thin, pale arrows, fast and far,
 Shot through the vastness of the night.

“ I thought of you—of these—of home,
 Where you, *my* moon, so wasted, too,
With toil and watching !—while I play'd,
 Hung o'er your ‘ Little Star,’ and said
 Its light was more than worlds to you !

“ And then I looked upon the cloud,
 And saw myself—a mass of sin !
That skies of suns—that years of light
 Might never, never, streak with white—
 So foul was every pulse within !

"I did not dare to kneel and pray—
And, yet, the inner *something* bowed !
How long I sat, I cannot say,
But, as I rose to grope away,
A light there streamed across the cloud !

"A sudden firmness seized my soul—
I pressed my lips and raised my hand ;
The breath, the word, was shaped to swear,
But reeling, dropping, then and there,
'I swear to walk'—who could not stand ?

"I lay and battled with the thoughts
That through my fever'd forehead burned ;
But long before that blessed dawn
Had hung the east in silver lawn
The prayer of earlier days returned !

And thence rang o'er my altered ways,
'Dear Mary, Mother! pray for me !'
Aye, thrice a week, from that to this,
I've stolen me here to watch your bliss,
And join your holy Rosarie !

"I had a way, a will, a power,
And words—I know not whence they came ;
I used them all for darkest crime,
Till, in the fulness of God's time,
I used them with a holier aim !

Five erring sisters, who were first
In every deed of shame and ill,
Have stol'n with me through weary miles—
Through sleet, through snow, by lanes, by stiles—
To join you by yon window-sill !

"This day one sufferer bowed her head—
I left the four—I could not stay !
'Twas something selfish-like in me,
At such a time—it *was* to be—
I left them watching o'er her clay!"

• • • • •

"The real ill, from real good,
Mysterious Heaven ! who can tell ?
If *one* has sinned and suffered so
That five the better way should know,
Oh, let us trust the *ill* was WELL !"

So spake the man of God that night,
And sat and fashioned in his mind
The nucleus of a little light
Might glide in secret through the night,
And steal upon our darker kind—

No vestal light, whose breadth of ray
May *dazzle* where it clearliest shews !
Oh, who would sin-in-suffering reach
Must steal by forms of thought and speech—
That only sin in suffering knows !

And well the WILD-VINE MISSION speeds !
And few its withering toil has sharéd,
More wondrous by her way and word,
In turning tendrils toward the Lord
Than Nelly, named the *Yellow-haired* !

Oh, never weary, howso' worn !
A sacred thing in rudest crowd—
A "burning and a shining light"—
She glideth through the depths of night,
And streams a glory o'er the cloud !





Miscellaneous.

H O W ?

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God!"—*Psalm xiv. 1.*

He sits amongst a thousand tomes,
In dusky strata, ranged around ;
The study sleeps in tinted haze,
The silence smites you as you gaze—
'Twould flesh the phantom of a sound !

He sits—a statue—fixed as fear ;
His pen he stayeth unawares ;
The lips reveal an iron mood,
The brain hath drunk the outer blood,
The midnight taper winks and stares.

His eye with vacu'm speaks in fire ;
The soul looks out—a massive calm !
He weighs the fashion of his hand—
Beneath his gaze its parts expand—
Anon, they're locked within his palm.

He speaks—" How simple—yet how strange !
This will—that power to obey !
The voiceless Will—the earless Power—
Declare the artist's mental dower,
But—dow'r and artist ! Whence came they ?

" From THIS there issues *This*—not *That* !
From LIKE is *Like*—the common rule !
That, therefore NOUGHT produces *Nought* ;
Alas ! what farther needs be sought ! "
How strange—so far—and still, a fool !

From Nought is *Nought* ! But thou—thou *art*,
And sayest, “ Yea ! ” Oh, worse than blind !
Thou, tottering ’neath thine *uncaused cause*,
Believest matter ever was—
Is’t easier of belief than mind ?

If something *is*—*was*—*must* have been
Eternal, *somewhere*, might a stone,
To life and thought, have shaped its grain
More freely than the living twain
Might, e’en from *Nothing* shape the stone ?

If something *is*—*was*—*must* have been—
Without a first—what darker thrall
Were thy believing this a God
Than seeking, where thy foot hath trod,
To find the first and last of all ?

If something *is*—*was*—*must* have been
Without a first, or that concealed—
What boots it what the thing we name—
That mystery of its first’s the same ?
But, granting Mind, the rest’s revealed !

From *LIKE* *is* Like !—the creed is God’s !
Though but an item of the whole—
Hence mindless matter—last or first—
Had ne’er that glorious something nurst,
That fills thy clay with thinking soul !

Oh, darkness ! Oh, excess of light !
Giv’st thou or thou the deeper fall ?
He searched the heavens, seas, and land—
He saw the maker’s *arm* and *hand*,
But pass’d them—*lost* them—seeking ALL !

And yet he lives in written books
Through many a land he never saw—
For, lo, this fool hath hung abroad
What might have been a lamp from God
But for the *darkness* from this flaw !

Oh, was it madness—wrath—or pride—
Great man—great mind ! who—what art thou ?
If thine Almighty hath, so clear,
Declared—“Behold, I am ! and *here*!”
Would thou confute him with a—“How ?”

The Lord spake to the wand’ring wave :
“Thus far—no farther—mayest thou wend.
The Lord spake to the mind of man :
“Behold, thine utmost stretch or span !”—
Poor worm ! with whom wouldst thou contend ?

Where wast thou and thy giant mind
One little year before thy birth ?
Didst bring thy wisdom in yon cry
That smote thy mother, when her boy
With virgin finger touched the earth ?

“My mind is fashioned by my parts—
The net result of then and now ;”
And they ? “They sprang from certain laws,
I look around and *know* the cause”—
Thy hand confutes thee with a “How ?”

Thou soarest through the place of suns,
Yet canst not torture from that hand,
Yon little secret of the WILL—
Thou think’st ?—alas ! thou thinkest till
Thy God becomes a grain of sand !

Whate’er thou art, beyond thy sin—
Aught beggar SELF proclaimeth “Mine !”
Look from the present to the past,
Didst mould it—know it—ere thou wast—
Canst thou bequeath it ?—is it *thine* ?

Is thine, by knowlege, word, or will,
What moved beneath thy mother’s breast,
When first thy bosom sluiced its springs,
And gave the embryo spirit wings,
To tremble in their secret rest ?

What was it—is it—whence or where
 It cometh—goeth—canst thou say ?
 It reasons not of fitting times,
 But, having rung its certain chimes,
 Thy kingdoms might not force its stay !

That mystic—grand, invisible—
 In thee, as in Behemoth's frame,
 Or through that living, millioned world,
 Within the peach-tree-blossom curled,
 In all so much, as if the same.

Its first or last, canst thou declare,
 Or mark a time it may not be ?
 The peopled plant—the living air,
 Or globe or globule, look'st thou there—
 Are they its first and last, to thee ?

Oh, thou, to whom so much is given,
 Yet who, so much, withholden find !
 Go, riddle aught within thy reach,
 But train thy thought, and shape thy speech,
 As doth befit a finite mind !

Yea !—thou, in much, so like a god—
 In more, a babe, unmeet for school !
 Cast down that peerless pen, and cry,
 In all a blindling's agony,
 “Lord—in Thy mercy—teach the fool !”



THE SUMMER OF SOUL.

A FLORAL FANCY.

OH, soft as the sunbeam that pales in the cloud,
 When the season of flowers is cold in her shroud !
 Thou shinest, sweet thing, where thy sisters, the dead,
 The light of their innocence once o'er us shed

So tenderly fair, so celestially pure,
I could wish thee for ever, as now, to endure ;
For if spirits take aught from the spirits they see,
How fair might be spirit still gazing on thee—
As clothed in thy spotlessness, white as the band
On the brow of a star when the dawn is at hand,
Thou peep'st through thy curtains of tremulous green,
Like a pearl where the shimmer of waters is seen !

Oh, long may the beauty of earth and of skies
Shine forth in the light of its manifold dyes !
May purple and crimson, and golden and blue,
Reveal the Great Artist, the Mighty, the True !
Yet long shall learned subtilty seek to define
Thy tent as "no colour," O worshipped of mine !
Ere the earth or the heavens shall show me a streak
So sacred to soul as that tint of thy cheek :
Oh, wherefore so marvel that Fancy delights
To be clothing the blest in her whitest of whites !
Yea, and blest shall they be ; may a whiteness disclose
To rival thy radiance, my beautiful rose !

O Beauty of beauties—so simple, so true !
What things that are fair shall we liken thee to ?
To the brow of the cherub, laid stilly to rest
On the heart where its lips never more shall be prest ;
Or that moonlight of look, where the cheek, wearing thin,
Revealeth the flame yet un-noted within,
While weaves the young student of deep-lettered art,
For *our* crown, but *his shroud* from the woof of his heart ;
Or the calm-orbed beauty which beams from the soul,
That the spring-tides of passion have ceased to control—
When the grief that can kill hath been changed into joy
By the light that no shadow can dark or destroy !
Ah, such is the beauty shall sweep through the years—
A hunter of shadows, a wiper of tears !
For each sparkle thrown out by the high moral mind
Shall flash down the ages, and *live* with our kind !

O Beauty of beauties—so simple, so true !
All things that are fair may we liken thee to :
To *all* beauties in *one*; yea, the beauty that bore
Yon light that ne'er shone on the sea or the shore !
To *all* beauties in *one*: even one which, though light
As the wing of a thought in the visions of night,
Our Schoolmen have fondled, our Minstrels adored,
Since first it came down from its Father, our Lord.
'Tis a thing without form in our purer of dreams—
A glory chaotic of manifold beams,
By science explored, yet but dimly defined,
Too subtle for eye, save the eye of the mind ;
A light ever changing, yet ever the same—
A halo that flits while we utter its name—
A tremour of pulses—a feeling, a joy—
A sensitive something a glance can annoy ;
A living idea—a spirit—a god ;
But unknown save where Purity treads, or hath trod :
'Tis our *sense* of the LOVELY, the PURE, and the TRUE ;
And it's that, my white rose, I would liken thee to !

But whence is thy beauty, O beautiful flower ?
Where wast thou when Winter was lord of the bower ;
When blackness and ruin mid-heaven were hurled,
Till they wrinkled, like sin, the dead cheek of the world ?
Nay, where wast thou only three little moons gone ?
Lo, here is a mystery, let us look on !

The bushes are bare of their *leaves*, as of fruits,
Yet Beauty lies shaping her soul at their roots—
Lies nursing young odours 'neath darkness and storm,
And quietly dreaming herself into form,
Till lifeful and lovely, 'twould seem as if snows
Brought scents with young Summer, in thee, my white
rose !

Ah, flower of whiteness ! thy life's but a day :
Thy winter approacheth, when thou must away—
And yet, had He willed it—thy Father and mine—
A Spring or a Summer eternal might shine !

He needeth no aid from the regions of snow,
For the bough to be green, or the blossom to blow ;
Nor needeth He aught from the gloom or the storm
To give odour new life, or dead beauty new form.
Not for HIM, as an aid, was an air ever purled ;
Was a blossom made sere, or a leaf ever curled,
Or a banner of black e'er His azure unfurled—
In the Life of His glance is the life of the world !

Then tell me, sweet flower, why gloom should appear,
Like the finger of Death, on the cheek of each year—
Why our moons should be darkened, their number so
small—

Why half Nature's life should be under a pall,
Or the merciless Winter come near us at all ?

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Oh ! could the high Angel who teacheth the hours
To gather the gold and the purple of air,
And give the young cheeks of the love-laden flowers
Those delicate touches we feel are so fair,
Have paused on his pinion to deign a reply
To any such butterfly querist as I ?

Or, was it the breath of my beautiful rose,
Deepened into such strains as in symbols repose ?
Or was it the *tread* of some musical thought,
Struck a voice from the folly its fancy had wrought ?
Oh, what shall I answer—the dreamer's so slow
To hear or perceive what the wiser ones know !
But it seemed as if, somewhere, some low melody,

Like the spirit subdued in some mightier string,
Or the voice of a passion that scorneth the wing,
Had shapen reply for my little rose-tree—
Such a tenderly firm, or half-tremulous thing,
And so holy, I would I of earth were as free !

For, alas ! any measure a mortal may sing,
Hath some gratings of earth in its loftiest key !
Oh, the grief that such sweetness and solace should be
So lost in this lowly translation by me :

Ho ! ye who weep over the pestilent pools—

Whence Reason reels drunken with vapours of doubt,
To wave, like a reed, 'twixt the "Word" and the "Schools,"
A winter within, and a desert without.

Grieve not for the passing of sunshine and bloom—

Grieve not for the triumph of night over day ;
Neither list ye yon voice from the deep-chested gloom,
'Tis the death that's in life ever prompting to say :
The feet of the pilgrim are steeped in perfume

From the flowers they kissed on their sunnier way,
But those lovelier lifes on his highway to doom,
Appear but to pass into dust for his tomb—

He, to-morrow, shall sleep where he revelled to-day !
Yea, he'll *sleep*!—but no star may that darkness illume—

Where the *night* and the *worm* are the monarch for aye !
Shall his reason seek there, and as *reason* presume,
That a life is concealed in that death and decay,
Or a Summer of soul in that Winter of clay ?
Yea !—Voice of the Slayer, we answer thee " Yea ! "

Man knoweth each Winter is sure of its Spring—

That the coming of morn is as sure as the night—
Is the tree or the flower a holier thing

Than the mind that's informed with a spiritual light ;
Than he who goes forth, like a god, in his might,
With the fate of the twain in his hand as a right ?

Let him list what a lesson these Seasons intend
On the great human hope to be crowned in the end—
On that *wish* for Eterne, which, to him, hath been given,
Wherein he should read the assurance of Heaven !—
For, lo ! the ALL-LOVING, to silence all fears,
Half sunshine—half shadow—hath tinted the years—
Hath rendered it needful, or *seemingly* so,
For the leaf to decay, that the blossom should grow !

Ah, mortal, behold, when thou bowest to weep,
How these seasonal changes unceasingly show

That if Winter be death, then is death but a *sleep* ;
By "Word," as by symbol, thou'rt taught it, and lo !

That thy memory should hold the great truth ever clear
 The life and the death of earth's glory appear—
 Yea, the twain, as thou seest, in the roll of each year !
 Thus and thus shall it be, as a sign and a rule
 Till the days of our planet be numbered and full—
 Till some dawn shall look down through the terrors, aghast,
 Where the seas from their Keepers convulsively breast
 By a might, more than Nature's, in mountains amassed,
 Like a morsel of dew, shall be sipped by the blast !

Then, the stars of the morning shall sing and expire,
 The sun from the heavens be molten and cast,

The four mighty winds shall each drop at his lyre,
 And the firmament, rolled on a tempest of fire,
 Leave silence, a moment, transfixed o'er the pyre,
 Till the smile of the Highest, while filling the vast,

Light a way for thy feet, where the way shall not tire—
 Then Winter and Death shall for ever have passed,
 And the SUMMER OF SOUL be eternal at last !



• A DEATH-BED DREAM.

OH, such a dream !—I've just awoke !—

I wore a dazzling new, white gown,
 And watched the waves, *as white*, that broke

Against yon rock, whose sea-pink crown

The clustering moss so overspreads ;

'Tis like a mattress stuffed with down !

Ah, often, in their flush from town

Right grand ones there have laid their heads,

And called our rock "The Feather-beds !"

O dear, dear rock—White strand and shore—

O early home ! O blessed dream !

That gave me so to walk, once more,

Away from city smoke and steam !

And yet I know my dream's but vain :

That blessed day shall never beam,
May light me over BUSHFOOT stream !
O Leassan braes ! Ah, dreaming brain--
I'll never see BUSHFOOT again !

There, straight and slim, up BUSHFOOT lawn,
Did dear old Auntie Matty stand,
And watch the kye, with Uncle John--
A sun-shade making of her hand ;
And Cousin Tom, he, too, was there ;
And Bella, down along the strand,
Where George some dainty play had plann'd,
And from the sea that blessed air
Rang wild with music, everywhere !

O spot, so blest !—O happy souls,
Who have such visions all the year !
Your bathing-pools, like marble bowls,
Hewn in the rock, and crystal clear !
Ah, what I'd give for but *one day*
To sit and see them !—e'en to *hear*
The shout of waves to me so dear !
To see them round the black rocks play,
And cloak them with their creamy spray !

And here and there, adown the hill—
Betwixt our auntie's and the sea—
The dear wee rabbits romped their fill—
The whole just as it used to be—
The *sandy hills* that hem the strand
Had bent would strike ye o'er the knee ;
But, lovelier still, and nearer me,
The shining sea-birds flocked the sand
That sparkled, whiter than your hand !

Ah, weary me ! I thought to win
Another wander round that shore !
May God forgive me for the sin
Of weeping, till my heart was sore,
As bright and brighter beamed the days,

And every sun but witness bore
That dear, dear spot *I'd* see no more !
But God is kind in all His ways,
Though my poor head I'll never raise !

'Twill soon be—*by* ! Ah, darlings, don't
For *my* sick fancies weep ye so !
Ye never grieved—nor now ye won't—
The heart they'll soon be laying low !

Alas—anee ! my silly eyes !
I thought no tears were left to flow—
I thought I'd drained them *long ago*—
And yet a *dream* the drain supplies—
Ah, when did dreaming make us wise !

But now, wee darlings ! let me rest—
I'll weep no more for Leassan brae !
The yellow shamrocks o'er its breast,
If 'mongst them, dears, some after day,
Ye think on "Mother," *don't* with *tears* !
For I'll be brighter than the MAY,
Though, *now*, to feel so far away
From all *so loved* in early years,
Brings down the night before it nears !

—————

MAY AND EVER-MAY.

Oh, 'tis coming ! Oh, 'tis coming, the glorious Summer
weather,
Though all pale the valley lieth as a dying thing
to-day !
And they're coming, coming, coming ! Ay, they're coming
all together—
The showers and the flowers that shall welcome in the
May !

Oh, the first of shining Summer
Cometh em'rald-kirtled May !

I have wailed along the Winter, as adown some lonely
alley,

Where each tenement, deserted, hastens darkly to decay;
And I sigh, I sigh once more, up the Lagan-lighted valley,
To behold the golden tassels on the mantle of the May!

Ay, the pretty yellow flowers,

Where the Lagan meets the May!

O, ye clumps of sunny glory, how many eyes have
darkened

Since last your golden beauty flashed along our joyous
way!

How many flowers have paled since we then, delighted,
hearkened

To the singing, to the ringing of God's music round
the May!

Ah, that e'er the voice of sorrow

Should be music for the May!

Say ye, wherefore, pretty flowers, when so sweet to be
together,

Do ye cloud your starry clusters o'er our lone, lone
wintry way;

And ah, wherefore are the fairest ever first to pale and
wither,

With no hope of e'er returning, like the flowers of our
May?

Ah, our brightest and our fondest

Shall not come again in May!

Still 'tis coming! ay, 'tis coming, the glorious Summer
weather—

The short and silvery night, and the long and golden
day;

And they're coming, coming, coming! oh, so joyously
together—

The showers and the flowers that shall welcome in the
May!

But our fairest, fondest, dearest,

Cometh not with coming May!

Cometh not—ah, never, never ! Hush ! More brightly,
silly dreamer,
Shine the Spirits of the Flowers that have passed
through earth's decay,
On the bosom of the Highest, on the breast of their
Redeemer,
'Mongst the Flowers of the Eternal, in the land of
EVER-MAY !
Where there never looms a Winter,
Nor a Flower pines for May !
And behold, the season cometh !—draweth ever nearer,
nearer,
When in sun that seeth no shadow, thou may'st shine
as well as they.
Shed thy mournful sack and ashes, and upon thy vision,
clearer,
Shall there steal some golden glimpses of the land of
EVER-MAY !
Where, around the KING OF GLORY,
Group the brightest of thy May !
Yea, behold, I feel it coming ! Oh, that Paradisial
weather,
With its showers and its flowers—I can scent them on
their way !
And I'll see them, see them, see them ! ah, I'll see them
all together,
By yon river, shining ever, in the land of Ever-May !
From the Great White Throne it floweth
In the land of Ever-May !

A FEW YEARS AGO.

We met not thus—we met not thus
A few years ago !
No icy forms were found in us
A few years ago !

Oh ! have we traced, in sunless sand,
 The days we've seen go by,
When truth was passed from hand to hand,
 And love from eye to eye—
When friendship reared, thro' gloom or glow,
 A Spring-bloom where we met ?—
Ah ! say her flowers, though tipped with snow,
 Have honey in them yet—
 Have odour in them yet—
 And should it not be so ?
 How oft we said
 They'd never fade,
 A few years ago !

We felt not thus—we felt not thus
 A few years ago !
A silken chain was song to us
 A few years ago !

When fervour winged young Friendship's sigh,
 While music heaved each soul,
Till honest tears, from Feeling's eye,
 Like trembling felons stole.
Oh ! by those cheeks that turned away,
 Or blushed, for being wet,
Our hearts, though withering, let us say,
 Have feeling in them yet—
 Have truth within them yet—
 And should it not be so ?
 Where'er we ranged,
 They kept unchanged,
 A few years ago !

We looked not thus—we looked not thus
 A few years ago !
The world had little furrowed us
 A few years ago !

But brightness leaves our every brow—
 Our spirits, too, grow cold—
We cannot nurse young friendships now :
 Then should we slay the old ?

Ah ! here, by every love and truth,
Our severed souls have met ;
Let's hold the flow'rets culled in youth,
There's honey in them yet—
There's odour round us yet—
And should it not be so ?
We'll soon be classed
With things that passed
A few years ago !



I C A N N O T S I N G .

I CANNOT sing ! You whisper—" Why ?"
'Twere weak to tell, and vain to try ;
But countless things combine to say
The music of my soul's away !
Ah ! wherefore should'st thou seek to know ?
Enough for me to say 'tis so—
Enough to feel a living man—
To feel the heart still throbbing on,
And all its holier music gone !

You say this brow 's uncarved by care ;
That time no snow hath sprinkled there ;
That through mine eye-ball's vacant glance
The spirit still can point her lance,
Or shed the dews of gentler mood
In all the warmth of youthful blood !
Enough—enough—and warmly told,
Enough—enough—but, warm or cold,
The heart, my friend, the heart's grown old !

Grown old ! unscathed by crime or clime ;
Grown old ! and yet but in its prime ;
Grown old ! Ah, why ? Ah, why avow ?
But God may guard thee, knowing how
The blight that springs from hopes decayed,
From faith abused, or trust betrayed,

The feeling heart more deeply sears—
More whitely on the cheek appears,
Than half an age of withering years !

But, mark !—I've said not aught was mine,
Thy smile can brand as cant or whine !
Still, of my heart, what dost thou know,
To say it might not e'en be so ?
Enough for me to tell thee now,
With manhood's prime upon my brow :
The noblest song-bird droops his wing
Beneath the blight of sorrowing ;
And I !—I may not—cannot sing !

Ah ! there were days no power of thine—
Nor sceptres flung to me or mine—
Had urged one woeful thought or word
To leave my spirit's secret hoard !
But 'neath this age, that seizeth hearts,
That iron pride of soul departs ;
And I am now that humbled thing
That feels its heart is withering—
That owns it may not—cannot sing !

MARCH.

OVER the hills, like a chorus of drums,
Or the shout of a sea, the wild March comes.

He sweeps the flood, where, shiv'ring and stark,
The seaman clings to the rudderless barque.

He lifts the wave from its surgy lair,
And scourgeth the wreck, with its creamy hair.

He mounts in his chant, like the bird of the dawn,
And the mother of oaks is laid on the lawn.

In his frosty thirst—in his windy haste,
He lappeth each pool as he scours the waste.

He curtains the mire-bespangled way
In a dusty cloud of a golden gray.

He passeth the pillow of young Disease,
And whispers the Pestilence, "Come, if you please!"

He looks upon Age; with a withering glare,
And smiteth the lips as white as the hair.

He greets the Consumptive with, "Time to depart!"
Then reddens the cheek with the last of the heart.

He hums, where the sexton shovels the mould—
"Dibble them deep : for their Spring will be cold!"

He harps on the willows, in passing along,
Till the slumbering buds have visions of song.

He breathes where the daisies arise, at his breath—
Like jewels of life on the fingers of Death—

Where moon-tinted primroses gleam, o'er the pass,
Like fairy-lamps, hid in the brown, short grass.

He breathes on the bed, where the seeds fall white,
And whispers the till-man, "Cover them light!"

With a tear and a smile he passeth away,
Sighing, "Nothing may mingle with Earth and stay!"

TOO WELL.

You say there's beauty in the glen ;
Ah ! sister dear, there's none for me ;
The yellow hill may dress again,
Its gown of gold I'll never see :
For there's a cloud upon my brain,
And Winter ne'er a blacker saw ;
And there's an ice through every vein,
The sun of Summer could not thaw !

To walk the fields with Jennie now
Would stain my sister's cheek with shame ;
And could I see you hang your brow,
And know that mine alone's the blame ?
No ! On my head—my guilty head—
Be all the shame that ever fell,
Ere you should wear its with'ring red,
For Jennie's having loved too well.

And, sister, we have seen the day
That sun would not have lit, so long,
The blessed bloom of milky May,
Without our melting into song ;
Or toying with the warrior furze,
That pointed many an emerald blade
Between its green young heart and hers,
That gloried in its gold cockade !

But love's a wheel, of magic rim,
That spins the sunbeam into snow ;
Ah, wheel ! ah, sun ! I loved but him,
Who, how I loved him well should know !
My mother's heart, my father's peace,
I broke them all beneath his will ;
How could I teach my soul to cease
The love whose fount is holy still !

'Twas coming through the Oak-tree field,
I sat beside him for the last ;
He tried, I thought, to lie concealed,
Till I had sighed and sorrow'd past ;
I asked my soul what I had done
To earn his frown, in dale or dell—
“Alas !” it said, “poor fallen one,
You only loved him far too well !”

I threw me down beside his feet,
And thought it cooled, or eased, my brain,
But still my heart the wilder beat
To hang, to heave on his again.

I saw once more your luring light—
Ye eyes—ye hazel heav'ns—that stole
The pride, the peace, the virgin white—
The sacred snow-tint of my soul !

I saw again the dear, dark locks,
These wasted fingers used to twine,
When love-led, o'er our evening walks,
He blessed the golden tint of mine ;
I saw his lips—they blessed no more,
But, coldly curled, did fiercely tell
My breaking heart all hope was o'er,
For I had loved him far too well !

I tried my grief—it could not speak !
I tried my pride—it might not be !
I saw the salt rain o'er my cheek
Fall, glowing, glistening on his knee ;
I felt the warm shame on my brow,
But what was shame, or what was pride ?
I shivered there—a blasted bough—
My life's destroyer at my side !

He sat—his fingers thro' his curls—
And chim'd the breeze a merry air,
While I'd have given a thousand worlds,
The heart he wrung had broken there !
I droop'd my cheek upon his knee,
He leaped—he vanished as it fell :
Ah, sister dear ! you know—you see
I loved—I love him still—too well !

I brought these daisies, nine or ten,
His reckless fingers from them cast ;
I thought they'd tell me, now-and-then,
Where I had sat beside him last.
Ye'll strew them thus—alas !—alas !
Above poor Jennie's grave, to tell
That thoughtless one, if e'er he pass,
She only loved him far too well !

MY MARY.

COME, draw thee near my elbow chair,
 My dainty little Mary ;
And, while your needles tic-tac, there,
Upon your forehead, still so fair,
I, with a one-and-twenty air,
 Shall plant a kiss, my Mary !

Shall plant a kiss, and bid it grow,
 So rosily, my Mary !
So star-like on that arch of snow—
That milky-way of thought, which so
Won all my worship, long ago,
 And bound my soul to Mary.

Do eyes grow dark, as Winter flee ?
 Then bless their darkness, Mary ;
For while, within, I clearer see
Two pictures fair—my God and thee—
Ah ! what are other sights to me,
 My guiding angel, Mary !
Oh ! 'tis not Winter makes us old,
 My little, merry Mary :
Your heart has neither blight nor cold,
Although your brow, of queenly mould,
Has changed, they say, its rippling gold
 For sober, silver Mary !

Ho ! on my cheek, and through my brain,
 What music frolics, Mary !
More witching than when Summer rain
Plays tip-tap on the whitening grain—
That hand—ha, ha !—'tis there again—
 Thy gleeful hand, my Mary !

Oh, Mary !—Mary !—blithe and mild,
 My dearest, dearest Mary !
I hear your laughter, warm and wild,
And feel once more a little child—
My love—my dove—my undefiled—
 My sun—my moon—my Mary !

SOUL OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

WHERE shall we seek for thee, Soul of the Beautiful ?
 By the life-springs of the Pure and the Dutiful !
 There art thou, veiled in the depths of thy brightness,
 Fountainless, fathomless, whitener of whiteness !
 Wreathing young Hope with a bough ever vernal,
 Fringed with the moonlight of splendours eternal :
 Midnightly wooing, from earthly beseeching,
 To where the hoar stars, like pale mystics, hang teaching;
 Angel-thoughts nursing, in spirits benighted,
 Glory-crowns casting for brows that are blighted,
 Binding heart-links between neighbour and neighbour,
 Breathing death-rust upon shackle and sabre ;
 Soul of the Beautiful, blest be thy labour !

Soul of the Beautiful ! Life of the lowliest !
 Lamp of the heaven-host ! mightiest ! holiest !
 Far o'er each burning and measureless mystery,
 Star punctuating the scroll of thy history,
 Peereth—through purple-wrapped pillars of fire—
 My soul in her dreaming—up higher—up higher ;
 Thirsting and praying, and seeking and sighing
 For beauties more subtle, sublime, and undying—
 Beauties to sing by Futurity's portal :
 “Death, the new vision, crowns Time an Immortal !”
 Oh ! 'tis thy whispering, Spirit of Nature—
 Oh ! 'tis Thy teaching, saith Faith the translator—
 Soul of the Beautiful!—God the Creator !

Where may I worship Thee, Holy One—Holy One ?
 Grand is the temple so loved by Thy lowly one :
 Out where the white wave, a cloud-chasing, soareth,
 Out where the summer-flame, thunder-hymn'd, poureth ;
 Out where thy Winter-Priest chants his wild psalter—
 Robing the earth like a bride for the altar ;
 Out where the moon o'er her silver waste wadeth,
 Out where each star 'neath its burning dawn fadeth ;
 Out where the dew-tassels, slumb'rous and golden,
 Glory-drops gleam, as the day waxeth olden ;

Out where the breeze-spirits sport on the river—
Dance—till the crystal nerves under them quiver—
Oh, for an altar there—ever and ever !



A VISIT OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

YE in the city there, sallow and sere,
What'll I tell you ?—a visitor's here,
After a wander of all round the year,
 Gilded and garlanded, ever so gay ;
Pure as God's pearl in the queen flower's ear—
 Ah, the sweet stranger's our beautiful May !
 And never were known
 Such hearts as our own,
Since dropped on us, ringing, our beautiful May !

April was loving—had gifts for us, too :
Primrose and crocus, so golden and blue ;
Pouting so oft, though I doubt—to be true—
 Some, in our souls, slyly wished her away—
Whether she dreamt of it none of us knew ;
 But while she brightened, the beautiful May
 Came flash on the lawn,
 Singing, “ April is gone ! ”
Ah, of all the twelve sisters, be mine, the sweet May !

Now, my young sycamore, tender and tall,
Comforts my eye with her new em'rald shawl ;
Now, too, the hawthorn there, over the wall,
 Tasseled with white, looks a queen in her way.
Who do you think, and *unasked*, did it all ?
 Oh, who but this stranger, our beautiful May !
 Nor is there a spot
 That to-day, by our cot,
Has not on some new glory from beautiful May !

Up from the grasses that fawn in the vale,
Crakes, now and then, the rude song of the rail,
Calling up memories of faces long pale ;
 Mornings and evenings for ever away.
Many a sweet, ay, and sorrowful tale,
Starts on my ear with each breath of the May !
 Ah, never was light
 Without sprinklings of night,
Yet who'd grieve, or feel old, with our beautiful May !

Here is she, there is she, all the day long,
Coaxing up flowers, and singing her song,
Scenting our lilacs, that dazzle the throng,
 Coming and going there, over the way ;
Doing so much and so little that's wrong ;
 Oh, what should *we* do for our beautiful May ?

 The song is not known
 That could equal her own,
Else might we hymn to our beautiful May !

What though you tell me she'll pass by-and-by ;
So, too, shall *we* ; but, like her, let us try,
With the smile in the heart, looking out from the eye,
 To live, while we live, were it but for a day—
To know how to live is to learn how to die,
 With hope of renewal, like beautiful May ;
 For death and the tomb,
 And winter and gloom,

Are passages only to Heaven and May !



B E A U T Y A N D T R U T H .

Oh Beauty and Truth !—they are sister powers,
Who hand-in-hand should ever appear,
That Beauty might screen, with her veil of flowers,
Her sister's lamp, when its light's severe !

Yea, Beauty and Truth! ye are twins—are one!—
Such was my spirit's unceasing lay,
And ever she wept, when the stave was done,
That the sisters walked not on her way :+
“ True—Beauty,” she sighed, “ there’s ever,
But Beauty, for me—ah, never !”

And ah ! while ever she wailed and wept,
Hither and thither the twain she sought ;
“ Beauty !” she cried, as her fleet wing swept
The heights and depths of immortal Thought ;
She sought from the Ice-god’s silvery halls,
To the star-paved paths of eternal June,
And away by the cloud-towers’ snow-white walls,
In the broad blue lands of the virgin moon :
“ Yea, Beauty,” she sighed, “ there’s ever,
But Beauty for me !—ah, never !”

She sat in a cloud-crag’s silvery cleft,
Far, far in yon waste of changeful blue,
While round and round, on her right and left,
The fire-wing’d worlds through the vastness flew ;
And, beneath, the lordly thunder hymn’d
The lordliest of his Heaven-taught staves,
And fearfully waltzed the mountain-limbed —
The eternal commonwealth of waves :
“ Yea, glory,” she groaned, “ there’s ever,
But Beauty for me !—ah, never !”

Thro’ the homes of men she walked, when lo !
An infant’s couch, and an infant’s clay !
The thin curls linked o’er the young brow’s snow,
And a mother’s tear on the white cheek lay,
Mingling the light of its lowlier lot
With traces of Mind’s immortal flame,
For a smile on the human marble sat,
Like moonlight fixed in a silver frame :
“ Yea, Beauty there *was* for ever,
But Beauty like this !—ah, never !”

AMARANTHS.

"Joy, Friendship, Fidelity."—*Language of Flowers.*

I LOVED a plant of mystic growth,
And wore its flower at divers times—
Yea, flower and fruit, I've worn them both,
And wove their names amongst my rhymes ;
And fancied, while beneath their charm,
From every leaf a glory streamed,
That only lacked a breathing form
To make my world the heaven it seemed.

Oh, how I nursed my Flower of flowers,
And crowned it with my holiest joy !
For then your wings, ah, songful hours,
Did moult me gold without alloy !
While brighter—brighter—still more bright,
The great white sun around us shone,
Till, dazed by love's excess of light,
My soul became her idol's throne !

Ah, me—the world spake very fair,
And hymned the splendour of my flower !
And sang how under Love's blue air,
No life were life but through its power.
And though at times, like joy or grief,
A grave abstraction it became,
Its simple sign—an ivy leaf—
Gave " Everlasting Friendship's " name !

O sacred power ! O simple sign !
Be ye, I sang, my life—my lay !
Since everlasting friendship's mine,
Be crowns and thrones for whom they may !
And thus, through all that Summer sent,
My flower upon my heart I bare,
My only wonder, while I went,
That earth had grown a thing so fair !

Thus, hourly, through the sheen of Heaven,
More brightly seemed my flower to glow,
Till Summer all her suns had given,
And clouds presaged the time of snow;
When, lo, my soul, all cold and lone,
Beheld her flower—its bloom was shed !
Some envious blast had o'er it blown—
My *everlasting* sweet lay—DEAD !

O false, false world ! O *most* untrue
O simple heart ! O soul of grief
Thou saw'st an *everlasting* through
The *greenness* of an ivy leaf !
An ivy leaf—what *there* hadst thou ?
The symbol of all selfish sin—
It hugs the unsuspecting bough,
To feed upon the life therein

Thus Thought and Feeling in my soul,
Together, through that grief-eclipse,
Conversed, as though a living coal
From Heaven's high altar charmed the lips !
Till, lo, the voices of the twain,
In dreary murmurs, sighed along,
Like phantoms of a sweet refrain
That breathed of long-departed song !

The friendships of thy world—alas !
Shall everlasting flowers have they,
When, like the glory of the grass,
The world itself shall melt away ?
O flower of sickly sentiment,
Begat and born of earthly fires,
Whene'er thy parent flames are spent,
Unblest of Heaven, thine *all* expires !

And yet on earth a friendship blooms,
Which, lasting more than moon or sun,
Shall, flashing through the night of tombs,
More radiant meet Th' ALL-RADIANT ONE !

But, ah, it blooms not 'midst the dross,
 Whereto the sensual soul is bound ;
 For, only 'neath the dripping Cross,
 That holier Am'ranth can be found !

O blest communion of the saints,
 Begot of Heaven and holiness !
 Of such, as free from earthly taints,
 Must be the friendships Heaven can bless !
 O ye, the cleansed beneath that Cross,
 What joy to feel—what heaven to know—
 No flower of yours shall suffer loss
 When clouds presage the time of snow !



R E C R E A N T M A Y.

O ! CHILD of the Beautiful—beautiful May,
 Who, mantled in glory, shot down t' other day ;
 A painter, a poet, the sweetest of bards ;
 With a voice like a seraph's, and love like the Lord's.
 Hath some mightier minstrel, the wild month's among,
 Unmindful the sparrow, hath twittered his song ;
 Unscathed by the nightingale, even while she
 Shook the blue breast of heaven with God's melody ;
 Hath whirl-blasts of envy been smiting thy strains ?
 Or hath some nobler artist been grieved with thy
 pains,
 That thou, ere hath faded the flower of thy noon,
 All veiled in death-dark, like an earth-shadowed moon,
 Goest wailing and weeping, like poor human clay ?
 Lo, the great soul of Nature seems all out of tune,
 And it's all from thy weeping, O fitfullest May !
 Ah, wherefore so changeful, so songless to-day ?
 We pine with thy pining, O sorrowful May ;
 We loved thee too deeply, once beautiful May !

Away with this weeping ! Leap forth from its shame !
Behold, there's a shadow shall fall on thy name—
Shall mark thee a place with those sisters of gloom
Whose fingers are stained in the heart of all bloom.
The shadow of frowns from the tree and the flower ;
The shadow of frowns from the soul of each hour,
That hung so enraptured o'er love and his lay,
And trailed her bright garments along his sweet way—
From hill-top to hill-top, where streams stealing down,
Made our old Lagan youthful, and lusty and brown ;
While the woods in yon distance looked up, and on high,
Like a green bracken bank on the rim of the sky.

Yea, that shadow of frowns is around us to-day,
Like the death-blight that falls from Miasma's green eye,

And it's all from thy glooming, O recreant May !

So false to thy promise, what *hast* thou to say ?

We're grieved to behold thee, our once *darling* May ;

Oh, that aught *could* be false was so fair as our May !

O, Life of the Lovely ! all holy, all fair ;

With the skies in thine eyes, or the moon in thy hair ;

With the rose in thy mouth, with the dew on thy feet,

And a music that made our old valley's heart beat.

Only look where thou shon'st but a few days ago,

And whisper the cause of this wreck and thy woe !

What *now* of thy gifts, once so pricelessly rare ?

Behold, they are dashed with the donor's despair !

It is true they were thine, or to give or withhold ;

But thou gavest, and surely thou need'st not be told

That if holding, as giving, were rightful to thee,

To hold what thou gavest was as rightful to me ;

To hold and to love—but what have I to-day ?

Why, even my darling young sycamore tree

Hath been scathed by thy wrath, thou most terrible
May !

And my lilacs, alas ! they so grieve me to-day !

Ah, there's no one could think you'd have done it, sweet
May.

How *could* one believe it of beautiful May !

Ah, I can't see a cause for thine anger or ail ;
But the proud throstle's spleen turns no *grasshopper* pale ;
Hence, for me, I would chirp, though *all* birds of the air
Thundered over my head—"Ah, but do if you *dare*!"
I would chirp as I do, with a hope, in the end,
That each *foe*, wearied out, would drop in as a *friend* ;
And I've met, the dear knows ! not a little of wrath
From the *just* or the *jealous*—I fancy from both !
From the tongue, from the pen ; with a name and without,
Till I've marvelled, dear me ! what it all was about ;
But without *once* a thought of e'er changing my tune,
Or regretting I had not been born in the moon,

Or gifted with musical thunder, as they—
You know a December can ne'er be a June—
No, nor ever a June have a voice like our May,
Though silent and sorrowful, oft, as to-day !
But we have not lost hope in thee, yet, our sweet May—
Oh, we'll *never* lose hope in our beautiful May !

Could thy light have been dimmed, or thy voice have been
hushed,
From what sages have said, when their spirits were crushed,
They have said that a *world* hath this planet of ours—
A very *great* world !—caring little for flowers—
Where NATURE lies bound at the footstool of ART,
Where HATE can seem LOVE, and where LOVE hath no heart ;
Where VIRTUE's called VICE when her thin robe looks old,
And where VICE, like base metal, takes radiance from gold ;
Where ne'er is the beautiful noticed or known,
Save in something lean Selfishness calleth his own !
God grant what they've said—if such world *be* at all !—
Hath been uttered in haste—that such world is but small,
And ever decreasing—Oh, grant it, I pray,
Till Beauty and Truth, from the hut to the hall,
Be prized as by *some* I have met, my sweet May !
Be prized as by *many* I've met in my day,
Whose souls' darkest chambers had flashed like the May—
Even flashed had one named but our beautiful May !

O daughter of Heaven!—all typic of love,
 And the vernal Eternal, so radiant above!
 I hear thee—I hear thee, or *fancy* I hear,
 Like a music, within—not a voice on the ear:
 And, though low is thy whisper, its language I know,
 As distinct through my spirit its sweet ripples go,
 With a rich roll of laughter, that saith, now-and-then,
 “And wouldst thou measure *me* with the measure of men?
 Alas! when she soars from my *acts* to their *springs*,
 Poor Fancy of earth, must have earth on her wings!
 Lo! to shine and to sing, without shadow or tear,
 Were what ne'er hath been given to visitant here!
 Still, the *night* hath its glory as well as the *day*—
 Yea, the soul's darkest drop is a pearl in her ear,
 Could she but behold it—yea, bright as thy May—
 A gem that shall light her o'er many a way,
 When wanting in sun—ay, or moon, of your May!”
 Ah, *more* of that lesson, God's beautiful May!

O child of the Beautiful, streamingly bright!
 O child of rare gifts, from the kingdom of light!
 O winder of odours! O mother of gems!
 More bright than the brightest in kings' diadems!
 Shine again, in thy beauty, and sing in thy pride—
 In thy deep love for *all*—even him who would chide;
 With the sun on thy cheek, and the moon on thy brow,
 All a glory that ne'er was such glory as now!
 Lift again thy soft lids, till our Father's own blue
 Shine into our spirits, and *brighten them*, too;
 For, behold, it is coming, when every knee
 Shall be bowed to the Beautiful, whereso' it be,
 For its beautiful self—not because of its ray
 Giving beauty to *those*, or to *thee*, or to *me*,
 Oh, that spring of the soul! Oh, that *spiritual* May—
 When envies and weepings shall all pass away,
 Like the rain-clouds that darken our May—our sweet
 May—
 Like the rain-clouds so darkening our beautiful May!

ONLY A WEED.

VERSES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

FLOWERS ! flowers ! sweet and fair,
Flowers have we everywhere !
Flowers of mountain, moor, and MIND—
Flowers that link us to our kind—
Even to Him who rides the wind !

Flowers of heart, and flowers of soul,
Flowers on many a shining scroll—
Flowers on many a cloudy knoll,
White and golden, pink and blue—
Flowers there blush from pole to pole—

Tipt with tears, or drowned in dew,
Sweeter though than Minnie Mole.
Many say they've met but few,
Wherefore, then, her album through,
Should we not have flowers too ?

Go, O Album, get thee such—
Beauty cannot shine too much !—
Till where'er our eye may fall
Shineth something meet for all !
Go, that when again we meet,

Thou may'st teem with memories sweet !
Flowers of fancy, fringed with light,
Gleaned along the wakeful day—
Rifled from the silent night,
Radiant as the milky way ;

Flowers of love for all that's bright
O'er the heavens, the earth, the main ;
Flowers of feeling, passion-white,
Lily-browed, with violet vein,
Tremulous as moonlight rain,

Holy in the grossest sight—
Sacred in their spirit-stain !
Flowers of faith in right as right,
Flowers that teach how truth is might—
Flowers, indeed, of all that's bright !

By the castle, cot, or tomb,
 Cull them, wheresoe'er they bloom !
 'Mongst the meek, or 'mongst the proud—
 State there's not without its flowers.
 Light may lodge in darkest cloud—
 Flowers amid the dingiest crowd—
 Everywhere hath life its flowers ;
 Yea, hath *Death* ! and though the shroud
 Seals them God's, through Hope they're ours !

Life or death, or joy or care,
 Each hath flowers, and all are fair !
 Wander, ponder where we will,
 Sweetness greets us now and then—
 'Mongst the willows by the rill ;
 'Mongst the brackens down the glen ;
 Neath the snow-belt round the hill,
 Where the heath lies brown and chill ;
 'Mongst the glaciers, stark and still ;
 Even the *waste* with death bestrown,
 Each some little lay might trill—
 Touching hearts, when not of stone—
 Over something fondly shown—
 Shown by love, and all love's own !
 O'er each spot to Fancy known,
 Flowers or florets have been grown.
 Wherefore, then, O Album fair,
 Should'st thou not some sweetness bear ?

Spake the Album : “ Look my leaves ;
 Hath thy vision failed or fled ?
 Are my leaflets dumb or dead ?
 Over each some tendril weaves,
 Blossoms of or heart or head—
 Something sweet, or sweetly said.
 Look ! and if thou failest to find,
 I'm deceived, or thou art blind !

Somewhat, though, I'd ask of thee,
Since, of sweets, I seem so bare :
If, as seer, thou dost see,
On the earth or in the air—
Heart or soul, or *anywhere*—
Aught of all so wondrous fair
As thy wondrous words declare—
Here upon some leaf of mine
Plant the proof as best thou may,
Light me with some gleam divine—
Plant a flower, or go thy way !”

• • • • •

Noble Album ! To my shame
Spake thou simply, *proudly* true !
Blushing from thine honest blame,
Ope thy glowing leaves I threw !
Flowers fold they ; flowers, indeed,
Broad and fragrant, fresh and free ;
Broad and bright be thine and thee !
But the nobler word and deed ;
Hearken sweet ! for lowlier me
Lowlier lot hath been decreed :
I've been gifted but to *see*,
Not to *nurse*, or flower or tree.
If, while I, at Fancy's knee,
Pulled and prattled for some meed,
In unguarded moment, she
Named her mystic Nursery ;
Even showed the shining seed
Of her golden imagery,
Ah, his mind hath other need
Than on lily's light to feed,
Who would grasp the gardener's key !
Oh, that *open sesame*,
Sacred ever may it be.
Many a gentle heart would bleed,

Might the grosser world succeed,
 Scaling Mind's divinity ;
 Hence *no flower*, and *scarce a weed*,
 I, at best, may bring to thee !

Wishest thou the worthless thing ?
 Then, behold, my weed I bring ;
 Which, although a weed it be,
 Claims a little word from me.

Seems there, on both leaf and stem,
 Something some might not condemn ;
 Something saying, wondrous plain,
 Nought below was made in vain.

In a world of good and ill
 Even *weeds* some office fill ;
 Yea, the *rilest*, search it through,
 Hath some work of worth to do.

This, a songful sort of weed,
 Merely whispers, " Read my rede ;
 Read, and if my rede you take,
 Keep me for my poor rede's sake.

O Beauty, wandering through thy bower,
 While from each *weed* thou turn'st away,
 Far ofter shouldst thou from some *flow'r*
 That lures thee by its richer ray ;

For fair and far a light may shine,
 Yet be, alas ! no light divine !

No light divine ! no light divine !
 While that which barely marks its place
 May be a beam of heavenly grace—
 An angel smiling in thy face.

Too oft some FLOWER, divinely bright,
 Hath breathed a poison through its light,
 For which some *weed*, too vile for note,
 Hath been the *only* antidote.

IN MEMORIAM.

R— R—

THE OLD AFFECTIONS.

Oh, can it be that in new attractions,
The spirits gone to the happy sphere
Shall e'er—forgetting the old affections—
Lose sight of dear ones remaining here ?
O silly fancy ! O idle story !
Begot by love on a phantom fear,
They watch with joy as our heads grow hoary,
The day arising to dry each tear ;
So those whose home is the world of glory
Still watch the dawn of our joy appear !

OUR WORKS FOLLOW US.

From quiet home, or bustling mart,
Our good, or ill, of head and heart,
Doth follow, when we hence depart.
Repeating thus what Scripture saith,
Why *lie* we in the self-same breath,
And call that *death* which is *not death* ?

Doth follow hath no meaning, save
A life is ours beyond the grave—
Beyond what *time* and *matter* gave !
The flesh ?—We *know* it *must decay*—
Its deathless tenant go her way ;
But *death* means only of the *clay* !

What then ? When hence there doth remove,
A soul whose walk was faith and love,
Such death below 's but birth above.

The happy soul hath won her place ;
Her light, in passing, all may trace—
It gilds the smile on yon dead face !

Which smiles, as 'twere, our tears to scorn—
 Which saith : Beyond the gates of morn
 This moment there's an angel born !

Oh, joy be ours, o'er those who sleep
 In Him who safe His own doth keep !
 O'er sinners only should we weep !

CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP.

It was not with the snows of time
 His locks had grown so strangely white ;
 He seemed to ripen in his prime—
 To wear a brightness in our sight,
 Reflected from that far-off clime,
 Whereof the Lamb Himself's the light !

To honours he disdained to wear
 He nobly worked and won his way ;
 His highest honours sought he where
 His hand could keep the wolf at bay—
 Where some poor child of Genius, rare,
 In her proverbial misery lay ;

Or where poor Virtue, 'neath the ban
 Of some mishap, lay bare and bound ;
 Or where some wildier, erring one,
 The path to purer life had found—
 There bent our Good Samaritan,
 With oil and wine o'er every wound !

Yea, oft ungrateful airs amid
 His Christian stand shut out the cold ;
 And what his *right* hand nobly did
 His *left* he noblier left untold !
 All *humbling* music was forbid
 The distributions of *his* gold !

'Tis finished ! Him no more we'll meet
In peaceful home or bustling throng ;
The kindly heart hath ceased to beat,
The welcome perished on his tongue ;
The chastened murmur of his feet
Is hushed his holiest haunts among !

We'll miss him, all, or less or more—
The friendly glance, the ready hand :
In losing such we lose a store,
Too vast, at times, to understand :
A kindly glance hath often bore
A harvest, wealth might ne'er command !

An active source of secret good—
Love led his life, and *blessed* its end ;
But, only standing where he stood,
Might one perceive how nobly blend
The tints illumed his *every* mood
In one grand whole—A CHRISTIAN FRIEND !

S O B E I T .

A Christian friend ! Could birth or fame,
Or even the holiest angel claim,
Or wear for Heaven, a holier name ?

I know not ; but it *sounds* to me
A strain of some vast harmony—
A theme for all eternity !

So be it, if but in the light
Of God's good will it read aright !
Alas ! so much there *seemeth* bright,

Whose veriest brightness *only seems*,
We shun at times our broadest beams,
Half fearful lest we'd serve but dreams !

Give us, O God, that clearer day—
 That glimpse of thy more certain ray—
 That sheweth best “The Life and Way!”

Give us that faith, sublimely strong,
 Which for the right dares brave the wrong ;
 Nor faints, though dark the night and long !

Give us the joy that fills his breast,
 Who, on the path that seems him best,
Unwavering, journeys towards thy rest !

Give us to meet—*all suffering* o'er !—
 That friend, a little gone before,
 Whose place shall know its guest no more !

LOVE'S IMMORTALITY.

Oh, tell us not that, in new attractions,
 The spirits blest in the happy sphere,
 Lose e'er the warmth of their old affections—
 Forget the dear ones who loved them here !
 O silly fancy ! O idle story !
 Love never waneth when God is near ;
 It beams to-day down the heavens hoary,
 And speeds the passing of every tear,
 May thrill the soul on its way to glory,
 And make the dear ones to-day more dear !

MOTHER EARTH.

O, MOTHER Earth ! O, Mother Earth !
 Thy night of naked bank and bower
 Grows radiant with its April birth
 Of lunar leaf and starry flower :

And, oh, we know they're wondrous fair !
 But, while we think they're thine and ours,
 Their odours meet us on the air—
 The passing spirits of thy flowers !

O mother of our trees and flowers !
O mother of our flesh as well !
How little of our *selves* is ours—
How much is thine, thou dost not tell !

The odours leave thy nursing breast,
But whence they come, or where they go,
Or whether find they e'er a rest,
We think and guess—we cannot know !

The leaf expands, the blossom blooms,
A fragrance o'er the winds is tost ;
And we—we grope our place of tombs,
And muse and hope o'er what we've lost !

We *hope* ? Alas ! Confirm, O God !
In what is hoped our tearful trust,
That we, their kindred of the sod,
Have something too which is not dust !

O, Mother Earth ! O, Mother Earth !
Thou hast thy griefs as well as we :
Thou hast thy days of death, and dearth
Of sweet and sun and minstrelsie.

Thou mourn'st, as we, o'er spirits pass'd ;
Yea, many moons thou sitt'st in gloom,
Till kinder skies have stirr'd at last
The newer life within the tomb.

Like thee we mourn our faded sweets :
But knowing this, unknown to thee,
The life that in and 'round us beats
A grander OWNER hath than we.

O, Mother Earth ! O, Mother Earth !
No life below shall *ours* restore ;
A silent phantom o'er our hearth,
Unwearied, writes his "NEVERMORE."

The life below ? It faints ; is *still* ;
Regarding not our pangs or powers ;
It sinks or sours beneath a Will
That taketh not its tone from ours.

Ah, what are we, or what is ours,
Of all the fulness we enjoy ?
Or whence have come the boastful powers
We oft unrighteously employ ?

Did we in council, ere our birth,
Preside, and shape the wondrous plan,
Whereby the atoms of our earth
Arose in each the proper man ?

Did we appoint for each his place—
His time to come—his time to go ?
Have we conduced, through time or space,
To aid the mighty “ Be it so ! ”

If *not*, Sir Self, why doth he claim
The lowliest leaf he sees or seeks ?
The breath wherewith he breathes its name
Becomes another’s while he speaks.

O, Mother Earth ! O, Mother Earth !
Behold a vision, strangely bright,
Here drives yon phantom from my hearth,
And covers all he wrote with light !

Or, with a rainbow-tinting pen,
Illumes the word, as writ before,
Till, ’reft of its initial “ No,”
It shines a dazzling “ EVERMORE ! ”

O Thou, the ONE—all powers above—
Who from the dust that flees the wind,
Didst form the Flowers we learned to love—
The sweets whose odours breathed of mind !

We thank Thee for what light's allowed ;
 Yea, for the *tears* so oft we see !
 We thank Thee for the night-black cloud,
 When Thou hast *willed* it black to be !

We thank Thee for the deathless soul,
 And for the hope that's hers to-day—
 That while the eternal cycles roll
 Shall bloom a blossom caught from clay !

O, Mother Earth ! O, Mother Earth !
 The *now* be thine, the *then* be ours !
 By annual death, if annual birth,
 Or resurrection have *thy* flowers.

Their life is—what ? An emmet's stride
 By changeful, yet *unchanging* law ;
 But ours, eterne, shall flower beside
 The Fountain whence our life we draw !

O blessed Hope ! With such 'twere well
 This simple truth to simply know :
 It little ails us few may tell
 Whence odours come or where they go,

If but it be that when, as they,
 Our spirits seek that *other where*,
 They rise, unstained by Mother CLAY,
 On odours of prevailing pray'r !

A VISION OF THE DRAGON.

(Written expressly for the "Temperance Bazaar and Exhibition," in the Ulster Hall, Belfast, December 13th and 14th, 1866.)

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the crient days—in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and unded the dragon."—*Isaiah ii. 9.*

I DREAMT, and saw the twilight's curdled gold,
 Like paling roses, tint the dappled east,
 When, lo, a trumpet-voice which spake—"Behold !
 The 'Eve of Samhin !' sacrifice and priest—
 The holy rite, the joyous feast—

Captive and first-born wait the sacred will,
Of him who crowneth whom he deign'th to kill—
Of him, the dread—the unapproachable—
Beel—samen, First of fire, the life of man and beast!"

I answered, as he ceased :
Too long, o'er sea and shore,
His word, whom we adore,
Hath poured its light,
For Pagan rite
To dark us evermore ! "

Sadly that spirit answered me :
" What boots the *form* of much we see ?
'Tis LIFE, not wood, that builds the tree.

What boots his change of form or name,
Whose *inner* life remains the same,
Or blossoms but to redder blame ?

What boots it that on every breath,
The carpenter of Nazareth—
His bleeding life, His mystic death—

Be common as the beams that glide,
With equal love upon the bride,
And on her grave at even-tide,

If up the sunnier slopes of time,
We bear the marsh-land's withering rime—
What boots it ?—Yea, 'tis *trebly* crime !

Behold, on this December eve,
Are sights might make e'en Druids grieve,
And man, in heaven, scarce believe ;

For, lo, beneath yon veil of jet,
Where Christ and alcohol have met,
A *worse* than Samhin reigneth yet ! "

'Twas evening by the sea,
Where, loftily,

Looked down, on either hand, the patient hills—
 There glared the clamorous street—
 The meek waves kissed its feet—
 Retreating white,
 As with affright,
 For o'er a fountain of a hundred rills
 The airs of heaven drooped, fond as the breath that kills !

And on that fountain's crown
 A beastly spirit lolled—
 Most fierce-like leering down,
 As forth the currents rolled
 And flashed, as he, in amber, blue and gold—
Yea, many a tint besides, that needs not here be told !

“ Whence is the beast whose beastlier heart
 Looks forth with such defiance ? ”
 I asked my guide,
 “ The illegal child of an ancient art,
 Or modern science,”

He replied,
 And sighed :

“ ‘Twere better old Alchemy still sought his stone,
 Leaving the bread of the peoples alone—
 Ah, ’twould have saved them from many a groan !
 Better than this—’neath a monster’s control—
 Seeing Alchemy’s self writing ‘ Death ’ on the bowl,
 Then, draining its poison—the deadliest known !
 To yon Beast, who, consuming both body and soul,
 Is the fiery dragon of Alcohol ! ”

Then, lo, methought I saw
 Forth from the city’s maw—
 From every putrid part
 Of its brick and mortar heart—
 A dingy human stream
 Rushing along my dream—
 Shaming the blessed skies—
 With matted locks and bloodshot eyes—

Grieving the holy stars—
With blood, and wounds and scars,
And other saddening signs of wild domestic wars ;
While each particular one or two,
Or all alone, or with some kindred few—
Kindred in robe and phiz,
And in low-den quip and quiz—
Choosing a rill, or sat or hurtled down,
Till bloody, black, or whitened brown,
The motley, sweating, swinking crowd,
Shivered the feted air with oath and laughter loud !

And there was youth with mumbling jaw—
Yea, grizzled locks on beardless men—
And swaggering babes, by Arab law,
To deadly manhood forced at ten !
Here draggled dolls of thirty wept
O'er wrinkled beldames in their teens ;
And yonder, through some murmur, crept
A music caught from holier scenes !
Yea, many a female face was there,
That must have shone in days gone by—
A human glory, far too fair
For aught beneath so foul a sky ;
And though by all the “Deadly Seven”
Its owner sat deformed, defiled,
Retained she still some tinge of heaven,
In yon brief glance upon her child—
Whose food, as shown by its unrest,
Had turned to poison in her breast !

“Hip, hip, hurrah !”
Then laughter rose—
“Hip, hip, hurrah !”
Then oaths and blows,
As rising, reeling, swayed the crowd,
While songs waxed mute, and groans grew loud ;
And sobered murder stood aghast,
Trying to join the disjointed past—

Trying to hope that yon maddening gleam
Was only a shred of some last night's dream,
Till he staggered away, with a groan and a gasp,
Brain-shot with the truth from that iron clasp,
While the crowd's breath seethed like the hiss of an asp,
As the wild mass scattered, and scrambled amain,
Back to the maw of the city again !

"I have taught thee by figure," the Spirit said—

"Altars of stone no longer are reeking ;
But, under the Cross, there's a sacrifice spread,

Wild as was aught in the 'Valley of Shrieking !'

Baal's no more, but a slayer more bland

Spreadeth his altars abroad in the land—

Binding the soul with a mightier hand—

Wooing and winning, with laughter and song,

What knife had not conquered, nor fire, nor thong—

The love of the weak, and the strength of the strong !

Yea, Wisdom himself hath been caught on his knees,

Worshipping—worshipping, even as these !

Ah, it is more than is often in man,

To flee from that worship when entered upon !

Christ may be quoted—His ministers teach—

Honour and beauty and love may beseech—

Nothing can save from the foe or the crime

But Heaven and precept, and labour and time !

Those thou hast seen will return on to-morrow—

If life, or the means, be their own, or to borrow—

Feeding for ever, with body and soul,

The fiery dragon of Alcohol !"

O, blessed Heaven ! O, blessed Love !

Forgive, I said, these lame and blind,

And teach us somehow to remove

This Vice of vices from our kind !

Oh, pity those who hug their chain,

Yet know the guilt, and feel the pain !

Thou knowest the sufferings of the poor—

How much, how long, they do endure ;

The scanty means, the sorry fare,
 O'er which the blithe "Enough's" so rare !
 Yon *penny*, stretched with so much skill,
 To reach some 'Castle in the air'—
 Perhaps some shred of decent wear—
 Is swallowed in the weekly bill ;
 Or, if a remnant sparkle, where
 So many wants demand a share,
 So worthless is't, for good or ill,
 That thought is more than mind can bear—
 That better were brain a howling lair,
 Than in such Present's deadly chill,
 To hear poor Reason wakeful still !
 Hence Hope, that hoped against despair,
 Whispers, "The cup that killeth care,
 You *worthless* remnant, melt it there,
 And let the future work its will!"
 That killeth care ? O blessed Truth !
 Are there amongst our still unsoiled—
 The ranks of Virtue, age or youth,
 Of those who toil or ne'er have toiled—
 Are there no souls of passionate ruth
 To teach poor misery, bruised and moiled,
 'Twere better to groan 'neath efforts foiled—
 Yea, watch each earthly hope expire,
 Than to sit with our serpent-thoughts uncoiled
 Where Reason wakes o'er Frenzy's pyre ?
 Are there no lips of living fire,
 To reach yon mass of breathing mire,
 And prove that cup a sweet-faced liar ?

Then flashed upon me and my view
 The city's myriad veins,
 The dappled green and hazy blue,
 And all the miasmatic hue,
 And sickening scent—yea, *slaying* too,
 Of cul-de-sacs and lanes.

Yet through them, ever now-and-then
Some bright-faced form I saw,
Showing to purblind men
Nature's and Reason's law ;
Lighting the dreariest den
With wonder, love and awe ;
Convincing clearer eyes,
Contending with the fool,
Aiding the crippled wise
To tread some golden rule—
Untinged by any school,
Save love of Christ and the Beautiful !

The vision vanished, and I paced
Beneath a spacious pillared dome,
Whose porches long, I knew, had graced
My native town, my present home ;
And yet, methought the dazzling stream
That round and round me never ceased
Befitted less an Irish dream
Than one that showed the golden East !
But, do I dream ? Behold, I hear
The organ's voice, the bugle's call !
And yet a sound that's still more near
And more familiar than them all—
It is, it is my own *footfall* ;
For lo, I tread our ULSTER HALL !”

Stir up, stir up each ember
Of love in every soul,
Till forth, this dark December,
A flashing glory roll
Along the months that follow,
The years that wait, afar,
To see each hill and hollow
Have its peculiar star,
Caught from the aid
Of man and maid,

Who, loving light,
With death and night
Declare eternal war ;
And lend their voice and give their might
To the Temperance Bazaar !
Oh, be their rest
Among the blest
Who aid the League's Bazaar !
A hundred stalls are streaming
With lights from heart and brain ;
A thousand eyes are beaming
Through mists of spirit rain !
Oh, may the pure communion
That rings the stave to-day,
From League and Ladies' Union,
Dart forth a quenchless ray,
Till ladies' stalls—
Yea, ladies' stalls !
Erect new walls
Of Temperance Halls,
Through cities, lands afar ;
And till, sweet Heaven,
Thy blue be riven
With the hymns from each Bazaar—
Each Temperance Bazaar !
Ah, don't they prove
Our God is Love—
And love this joint Bazaar !
Then ring the mandate, pealing
From organ, trump and drum !
Stir up the soul of Feeling,
And bid the peoples come.
What ho ! thou seven-sleeper,
So coldly-wise at heart,
Thou'rt *not* thy "Brother's keeper?"
Yea, verily, thou art !
As sure as Heaven
To thee hath given

The finer ear ;
 The eye more clear
 To note where chords may jar,
 He'll quest the *why*
 They were not by
 In our Temperance Bazaar ;
 Our Temperance Bazaar.
 Pauper or Peer,
 Thy duty's here
 To aid in our joint Bazaar.

And art thou free from vices ?
 Admitted, all its length ;
 But who is he despises
 His kind for lack of strength ?
 Peace, peace with such presuming,
 And inly steal a view ;
 Ah, what's there *there* but *human*,
 And might have fallen too ?
 Save for His arm,
 Who kept it firm,
 Or less to *blame* !
 Then *lift* His lame
 Where healing waters are.
 Such to obey
 We light our way
 With a Temperance Bazaar ;
 Ladies' and League's Bazaar.
 Oh Love shall write
 Their names in light
 Who aid the League's Bazaar.



INAUGURATION ODE.

(Composed expressly for the opening of the Belfast Working Men's Institute and Temperance Hall.)

INSCRIBED TO MY FRIEND, THOMAS GOODMAN,
In humble admiration of his artistic fancy and the fruits of his prolific pencil.

CHORUS.

O MIND Almighty, fount of beams,
That all partake of more or less,
This Temple, sacred to our dreams,
Of Truth and Beauty, deign to bless ;
Till, radiant from its centre, streams
A beam of Love and loveliness,
Revealing to remotest lands,
In works of holiest form and hue,
What Irish mind, and hearts and hands,
For God—for man, and art can do !

TENOR SOLO.

O City Queen, our Ulster's pride !
If toil or tears had dimmed thy tale,
With upward eye and upward stride,
Thou, toiling, did'st and shalt prevail ;
A glory by old Lagan side,
Wherein shall all old vices quail.
Oh ! may thy sons of every grade
United long behold thee stand,
All self-sustained, as all self-made,
A Fountain in a fruitful land.

CHORUS.

Oh, here before the Highest's throne
Let high and low proclaim the need
Each hath of each, as brain and bone
To work for each hath God decreed.
Who toils for self, and self alone,
Toils for a pigmy soul indeed ;
But Wealth, betrothed to Manual skill,
Whereof this Temple is the seal,
Shall, blessed by Heaven, make clearer still
God glorified means HUMAN WEAL !

THROUGH THE MAY-FLOWERS.

If life be a sorrowful race, love,
What's that but a reason why we
Should look little griefs in the face, love,
With something of innocent glee ?
If a cloud o'er the sunniest *day* lowers,
To weep o'er its shadows were vain,
Then merrily out through the May-flowers—
We never may see them again.

If some have been selfish and cold, love,
If some even *slay* while they smile,
I know, and *you* needn't be told, love,
How far have been others from guile ;
If hearts that pretended so true, love,
Be dark as a cloud at the core,
Oh, pity them !—that's what we'll do, love,
And cling to our white all the more.

The false with the false let contend, love,
Deceit by deception be paid ;
But we—ah, we'll never descend, love,
However deceived or betrayed !
For, *truth*, when the darksomest *day* lowers,
Shall rise like God's bow o'er the rain !
Sing merrily, then, through the May-flowers,
We never may see them again !

I know the white cankers of care, love,
Have gnawed at each rose of my joy ;
Yet seem you this moment more fair, love,
Than when on yon green of Armoy,
You shone, till—ah, me ! But, away, love—
Away with what anguish would tell—
Enough, what the fading cheeks say, love,
I know it, sweet heaven, too well !

Your heart's with the green of the hills, love,
And, oh, that a blossom so sweet,
Away from its daisies and rills, love,
Should pine in the dusts of deceit !

That a spirit so gentle and lowly,
 While yet in the psalm of its spring,
 Should find what it fancied so holy,
 A sad, or a wearisome thing !

But Heaven's as true as of old, love,
 And grief has its purposes grand ;
 And Spring, in her green and her gold, love,
 Is out, like a song in the land ;
 And *right*, when the darksomest *day* lowers,
 Shall shine like God's bow in the rain—
 Then merrily out through the May-flowers—
 We never may see them again !



V I S I O N S .

LAST night I dreamt a strange dream,
 I saw a youth of long ago,
 He gazed within a deep stream
 Where moon and stars looked from below.
 And there, too,
 The waves through,
 A fairer thing than moon or star,
 With pale cheek,
 So Christ-meek,
 Seemed gazing on him from afar ;
 Oh, sadly smiled those lips apart,
 While up the ripples seemed to steal
 Her words, as from a breaking heart,
 “We may not speak of all we feel!”

The vision changed : a bed-side—
 A tearful group—a dying maid—
 So raven-haired, so dark-eyed !
 With still, for *one*, a word unsaid !
 The group passed,
 The youth, last,
 Remained to learn that last demand.

While lying,
And dying,
She could but closer press his hand ;
Till o'er her lips of quivering snow
Life's sunset glory flashed its seal,
Yet then she only whispered—"No !
"We may not speak of all we feel!"

The vision changed : an old man,
A mossy grave beneath his knee ;
He murmured, while his tears ran :
"I little dreamt *her* love for me!"
I gazed till
That weind rill,
Its moon and stars came back again,
Where knelt on
That old man,
And pierced the waves with this refrain :
"To Memory's deep, reflecting waves,
'Tis sweet, at times, from joys to steal,
Though even *there*, and 'mongst the graves,
We may not speak of all we feel!"



ALL WEARS AWAY.

NEARER, darling ! Raise my pillow—
Let me see those eyes again !
O, my own—my weeping willow,
How that weeping sears my brain !
Here, o'er him thou so reverest,
Kneel, my angel, kneel and pray—
Suffering *is*—but O, my dearest,
Suffering soon shall wear away !

Had our lot been halls and towers,
This had been the end at last ;
Ours has been no path of flowers,
But the worst will soon be past.

Joy or sorrow—shame or glory,
Darkest night, or brightest day,
Closes with one simple story—
Best or worst, it wears away !

Bright one—white one—fairest—purest !
Strive no longer with the stream !
Soon or late, the one thing surest,
Proves all others but a dream.
Hope no more for health to visit
This, already so much clay ;
Life or death, below, what is it ?
Both, below, must wear away !

Draw the chair, and sit beside me,
Take this wasted hand in thine ;
Did I, dearest, ever chide thee—
Few the failings were not mine ?
But to 've been so long together,
Groping through such darksome day,
Few have had less blustering weather—
Seen it sweetlier wear away !

Still, though souls their young affections
Nurse in Winter as in June—
Trials weaken earth's attractions—
Make the bed of death a boon !
Oh, dear weeper, how I've loved thee—
Loved—adored thee, who shall say ?
True as Heaven thou'st ever proved thee—
But it all must wear away !

Closer ! Closer ! Wherefore grieve me !
Deeper wound with sigh or groan ?
Thinkest thou I long to leave thee ?
Ah, my love, my life, my own !
Touch my lips, I'm wearied speaking—
Touch my lips—why, thine seem clay !
Love of loves ! Her heart is breaking—
Both together wear away !

THE PILGRIMS OF MORNING.

With staff and scrip and iron will,
And golden hopes to bear them,
We 'rose at morn, and faced the hill
That Wisdom said would wear them ;
The fiery lark, the clouds among,
Our peaceful pathway scorning,
With silvery cannonades of song
Assailed the gates of morning.

We stayed not for the noon-tide heat,
Or storm-cloud o'er us looming ;
Nor could we think of wounded feet
For sweets around us blooming ;
And when the night dropt darkly down,
With scarce a streak of warning,
There, blithely, couched on heather brown,
We sang, " 'Twill soon be morning !"

And still we sang that hopeful song
When evening found us weary ;
For ah ! that up-hill way was long,
And sometimes bald and dreary—
Yet, while we sadliest mourned the light
Our path erewhile adorning,
We sang, " The Power that sent the night
Can also send the morning !"

And gentle voices, spirit tongues,
Whene'er our souls were sinking—
As if our Fancies uttered songs,
Or made a music thinking—
Stole round us through each lessening light
With words of cheer or warning :
" Bear on, bear on ! for still through night
Must wind the way to morning !"

And still in brightness or in gloom,
Where sweets appeared, we gathered—
A few had bane within their bloom,
And some—the sweetest!—withered—

Till on that tall hill's crown we stept,
 Where night, *unchanged*, returning,
 "O God!" we sang—but singing, wept—
 "Come lead us to the morning!"

Ah! voices of that weind up-hill,
 So long your solace lending—
 Why breathe ye not yon anthem still—
 Why cease in our descending?
 Ye said the tears from Virtue's eyes,
 O'er Fate's or fellow's scorning,
 Turn crystal steps whereby she'll rise
 Beyond the gates of morning!

Oh, long forgot's that hopeful song
 Wherewith that morn we started;
 And few the lights we walked among
 That have not long departed;
 What still *might* shine, strange shadows drown,
 By some dark Power's suborning,
 Till night alone comes down, and down!
 Ah! when will come the morning?



LIFE AND DEATH.

Air—Molly Asthore.

The above air has long been one of Ireland's most popular. Verses written to it—and there have been many—may pass away; but the melody must live and be appreciated so long as tenderness and simplicity have a place amongst our ideas of the beautiful.

CALM in their green-hill fountain sealed,
 The crystal waters slept,
 Till passing Fate a chink revealed,
 And forth the streamlet crept;
 Then far o'er many a flowery glade,
 Through beams unfelt before,
 That little wanderer lisped and played,
 And sought its home no more.

Still, like a streakling of the dawn,
With trembling tone and beam,
The gentle thing stole tuneful on,
Rejoiced to be a stream;
Till ruder children of the hills
Their currents downward bore,
When, wedded to a thousand rills,
It dreamt of peace no more.

A reckless thing, with passion pale,
It rolled, or rushed along,
And smote the silence of the vale
With river's rudest song;
Till, lost to prudence as to peace,
It braved the billows' roar,
And soon in ocean's seething fleece,
It was a stream no more!

Nor longer was its fount the same,
So wild the waves grew there;
And larger still that chink became,
For even rocks do wear;
Till, drained of every crystal spark,
And gleam of good it bore,
That chamber yawned, a void and dark—
A ruin evermore!

And so, I said, within our breasts,
As dreamless and as pure,
The embryo wave of passion rests,
From all desire secure,
Till some stray Fate a pathway makes
To beams unfelt before,
When lo! the pulse-born slumberer wakes,
To rest—ah, never more!

And so, too oft, the wakened Power
Goes forth amongst its kind—
A rill that breasts the burning hour,
Nor ever looks behind,

Till far from Reason's voice and view
 It throbs along the shore,
 Where hopes, once sure and sacred, too,
 May vanish—evermore !

THE MINSTREL'S ROSE.

No wealth have I wherein to pride—
 One little garden fair,
 And one white rose I call my bride,
 Are all my worldly care ;
 And surely Heaven my wildling nurst
 That I might breathe and move ;
 For Minstrel hearts, they say, would burst
 Without some sweet to love.
 O snow-pale rose ! O white, white flower,
 Meet bride of minstrelsie ;
 Thou ne'er canst know,
 Nor minstrel show
 How dear thou art to me.

There is a glory of the stars,
 Another of the dew ;
 A glory of the ebon bars
 The white moon passeth through ;
 There is a glory of the Spring
 That hints of heaven's own ;
 But more I love this pearly thing
 Than all the glories known.
 O meek, meek flower ! O white, white rose !
 Let truth alone endure ;
 The brightest bright
 May *not* be white—
 The whitest white 's the pure !

I had a vision through my youth—
 A dream of smiles and sighs :
 A something rayed around with truth,
 For ever mocked my eyes—

O type of that exceeding fair
 Which steeped my soul in tears,
 While *vainly* followed, here and there,
 Along the breathless years ;
 O dear, dear flower ! O white, white rose !
 Couldst thou but hear and see
 Within my heart,
 Thou'dst know thou art
 A dear, dear rose to me.

And resting thus upon my breast,
 Thine odour all thy dower,
 Thou breathest through my soul's unrest
 With such all-holy power,
 That though I press with fevered lip
 Each leaf as it unfurls,
 I would not dark one snowy tip
 For many, many worlds.
 O white, white flower ! O snow-pale rose !
 When love's but tinselled sin,
 Or guile would wear
 An angel's air,
 Pray God the veil be thin.

And while thou shedd'st, my pale, pale rose,
 Thy heaven of fragrance there ;
 And while I breathe o'er thy repose
 A minstrel's holiest pray'r,
 I'll dream thou art no more a flower,
 But all a living soul
 That binds me with a mystic power,
 Not angels might control.
 O snow-pale thing ! O white, white flower !
 Were all so dreamt to be,
 Could soul or heart
 Feel all, or part,
 More dearly dear to me.

Yet, dreaming, I'll look down thine eyes,
Till far within their brine
Our spirits meet, and mingling, rise,
Thy whiter tinging mine ;
Yea, till beneath its chastening power
The world shall melt away,
And leave my soul a fitting flower
To part its stem of clay.
O white, white rose ! heart-breaking flower !
Though kindred souls were we,
Thou ne'er couldst know,
Nor mortal show
How dear thou art to me.

But while I woo thy tender beams
To light me from the past,
And shine—yon glory of my dreams !
In breathing form at last ;
Behold ! while soul within thee glows
The vision melts away,
And leaves an *infant* with a rose—
The minstrel and his lay.
O snow-white rose ! O pale, pale flower !
Couldst thou but hear or see
In soul and heart,
Thou'dst *know* thou art
The dear, dear rose to me.



ONLY A FANCY.

Hast thou ever known a flower
Which, when years had bustled by,
Flashed again upon thy dreamings—
Dreaming 'neath a darker sky—
Till its phantom light and fragrance
Forced a moisture from thine eye,

As arose beloved faces,
Filling long-deserted places
In thy wakening memory ?

Heaven help me, I am weary—
Ah, *how* weary can be known
To the Love that never sleepeth—
The Almighty love alone—
As I climb my silent towers—
Towers not of brick or stone—
Towers whose aërial porches,
Lit by Fancy's thousand torches,
Often flee beneath my moan !

Yet, I love my shadowy castles—
Ah, they're all the world to me !
Where, if limbs be weak and shackled,
All the soul is strong and free—
Free to build, and gild and glory,
In her might a queen to be,
Even while her home, more lowly,
'Mongst the wreck of things unholy,
She can, downward looking, see !

Thus I walked a moonlight garden
By my towers of the night,
With, at every side, a shadow
On my left and on my right ;
They were spirits, good and evil,
One was dark and one was bright,
As is soul in infant faces,
Or as, in Day's death-embraces,
Blusheth heaven's feathery white !

There were flowers young and many,
Glowing, glistening, here and there,
As when o'er the dews of summer,
Morning floats her golden hair ;

While one spirit urged my culling—
'Twas the *dark* one, *not* the fair—
Till my full heart's solemn heavings,
Bounding hopes, and lame misgivings,
Rose like voices on the air !

For, though beauties never, never,
Burst the teeming earth like these,
They were mingled, good and evil—
Body's health, and soul's disease,
Holding, in their fieriest splendour,
What the fieriest truth might freeze ;
So, I sighed, and whispered meekly :
“ Nay, my eyes are dim and weakly,
And I know not which *should* please !”

Then the fairer spirit caught me,
And I wandered where she led,
While the *darker* followed, chiding,
Though I knew not what she said ;
Till a lake there gleamed beneath me,
Like the round moon overhead ;
Green its banks, and flower-besprinkled,
Then I sat, and songlets tinkled
O'er each trefoil round us spread !

Leaves I wove in links together,
Doing what I did not know,
Till the fairer spirit's fingers—
Pencils—things of tinted snow—
Caught my wreath, and while they strewed it,
“ Little sweets,” she murmured, “ go,
Root along the coming hours,
Seeds are ye of many flowers,
Which from out the winds shall grow !”

—
—
—

D E F I C T U S .

So cold, De Fictus ! Say'st thou so ?
 How more than strange that such should be !—
 That I, the humblest of our kin,
 Should dare my coldness show to thee !
 Who am I ? What ? A toiler's son,
 And thou a chief of lordly line !
 Pshaw, sir ! Such blood as thine to run
 In these, erst, pauper veins of mine !
 Thou fallest far from thy degree
 In noting cold or warmth in me !

Thou call'st me friend ! *Thy* friend ? great sir !
 Thy courtesy's a marvellous balm ;
 But such from thee to such as I
 Can never mean beyond a sham !
 Thy kindlier feeling, hand, and tone,
 I might have earned them, as yon hound,
 Thy faithful *slave*, whom from his bone,
 If once he dared to turn him round,
 Or greet one hand, thou wouldest ignore,
 Thou'dst *hang* upon thy stable door !

My sires, say'st thou, were thine own—
 What ! thine ? Indeed ! Then whence the boor
 Who heaped this horrid guilt on me—
 That crime—the *one*—of being poor ?
 My father ? Ha ! unrighteous man,
 He gave, and gave, and spent estate,
 So fell, nor knew—poor erring one !—
 Benevolence could debase the great ;
 He learned the secret, though, from thee ;
 And I—poor wretch !—I've learned as he !

The sire *sank*—the son hath *soared*,
 And now thou greet'st him as thy kin !
 Ah, pause, De Fictus ! Lo ! these hands
 Are flinted o'er with manual sin !

Ay, horned with *toil*, that could but stain
The ‘high-blood’ scutcheon of thy race ;
What maggot pricks thy princely brain
To look on such ignoble face ?
There stands no statue in *my* hall,
That rose upon some good man’s fall !

With honest sweat of hand and head,
I drowned the evil of my fate ;
And, barred from aid of thee or thine,
I’ve won my father’s lost estate !
Yea, burrowing in “congenial mire !”
I dreamt such dreams of toil and meed,
As some, who taught by wiser sire,
Had scorned as grovelling dreams indeed !
Ah, well, De Fictus, scorn away—
I’m “cold !” Be thou as *proud* to-day !

Be proud, as I’ve been cold and low—
Too cold to note thee or to blame,
When all thy wealth’s—position’s power
Was strained to blast my hopes, my *name* ;
When, through the lowest falsehood’s cell,
Thou sought’st for every thick and thin,
That avarice—envy—hoped might tell
Against me, where the law of kin
Some kinder heart held sacred still,
And yearned to soothe me in my ill !

I knew thou loved’st our kindred’s gold—
I knew thou feared’st its passing thee ;
But there was more : The very stones
Had rung thy want of soul for me !
Thou loved’st the praise for generous deeds—
The *praise* ? Ah, yes ! but not the *cost* ;
So thou, when told, “Thy kinsman bleeds !
A noble soul !—he can’t be lost !”
Thy coin and credit, both, to hold,
Didst dark mine honour’s whitest fold !

Behold, De Fictus ! Through the dark,
Imagine thou canst note a knave—
A saintly-seeming wretch who toils
To dig thy hopes a secret grave—
To stab thy fenceless worth—thy name :
Thou risk'st the rest, where *all* may *see*,
Thou slay'st the slayer—brav'st the blame ;
Who is the worse—is't thou or he ?
The cloaked, who kills by rule and square,
Or he who meets, and *smites*, him bare ?

I “ dream ?” Why, yes—and *wicked dreams* !
Ah, thing of smiles, so saintly bland !
Thou wretch ! if I, in days we've seen,
Had met and slain thee with this hand—
Had dragged thee to the blaze of day—
My *seeming friend*—my *secret foe*—
And strewn thee, piecemeal, by the way,
I know not that, above—below,
One holy lip—one righteous tongue,
Had said the act, if *rash*, was *wrong* !

Away—away ! and *fear* yon *sun*,
Beneath whose beams thou shiverest so ;
For me, I'd stain no finger tip
With thee or thine, for all below !
“ So cold ?” Indeed ! Ay, cold and *proud* :
The blood thou claim'st, its *best* is mine !
I've worn it through the sweltering crowd,
And stand once more a peer of thine—
A peer of *thine* ? Nay, nay, I trow,
I know not where a peer hast thou !

No, no ! ye heavens, above us spread !
His noble titles, towers and lands,
I would not own them, if I might,
For but the touching of his hands !

Be mine my coldness—ay, *his* pride,
 If still with such—my honest name,
 He tried to blast it; ah, he *tried*!
 He FAILED! I leave him to his shame—
 I leave him to such curious gains
 As souls may win by deadliest stains!

If he have fallen so deadly far,
 I may not follow, *even* to blame;
 Some nature, like his own, may howl
 Above the prostrate carrion game:
 Some stricken wolf, the cur may bay,
 Or lap from wounds he dared not make;
 The nobler hound pursues his way,
 Contented with one deathful shake!
 I bay not o'er a fallen foe—
 Cold? NOBLY cold! De Fictus—go!

R E C O L L E C T I O N S

OF SACRED SCENES:

INSCRIBED TO THE READER!

Thy brows, young Friend, I may not crown,
 With aught wherewith to win renown;
 Or send thy name the ages down.

It seems to me, who think I know,
 Thy soul, with gentler fires aglow,
 Would little love my doing so.

Nor can I clearer, to thine eyes,
 Portray wherein *true* greatness lies,
 Than thou perceivest—thou art wise.

Yea, wise thou art, and even more—
 Methinks, a something at thy core,
 Doth speak a gracious heretofore.

For, right or wrong, 'tis understood,
That man inherits, through his blood,
A certain force for bad or good.

A certain tinge, as *well* as force,
That, like the streamlet, through its course,
Reveals its far-out wandered source.

Or, as the flower, our way adorns,
Declares the seed of yestermorns—
It is not figs we have from thorns.

If, then, the present draws such dower,
From, oft, some century-shrouded hour,
The past we've *seen* should speak with power.

Its every scene, though long from view,
A faithful memory will renew—
Let's, therefore, call our thoughts thereto.

I met thee while thou still wast young—
A harp, as 'twere, untuned—unstrung,
And prized thee for thy truthful tongue.

I caught thee by the willing hand,
And bore thee from thy native strand,
Away o'er many a foreign land :

Beholding many a wondrous sight,
Oh, saw we, through each dazzling light,
A God of *love* as well as *might* ?

If not, far better had we been,
Each on his native village green,
With *village* faith in the UNSEEN !

For whether roam we hill or plain,
By forest shade or shadeless main,
There's nothing should be seen in vain !

Whatever is, or foul, or fair,
Was made to serve its *then-and-there*,
And not alone, the empty air.

“ What then ?—Beneath yon circling sun,
Methinks are lands ”—exclaimeth one—
“ That man hath never trod upon ;

For what, or whom, was nursed yon rose
That there, *unseen*, so sweetly blows ?”
Who’s he, I ask, thereof that knows ?

“ Yea some,” he saith, “ have wandered there,
And gazed on sweets divinely fair,
With never an eye to know or care.”

O, ingrate, hush ! For thee, or those,
Cast on the wild whereon it grows,
May Love have nursed that desert rose.

Ah, deem not this one’s lack of mind,
Or that one’s spirit being blind,
Can make great Nature’s God unkind.

The Lord of love—the God of power,
Or builds a world, or shapes a flower,
And we, frail creatures of the hour,

When star or blossom meets our gaze,
Instead of giving God the praise,
Moil o’er the *wherefore* of His ways.

Ah, where we meet or weeds or flowers
That soothed no other gaze than ours,
Let’s rather *thank* the kindly powers

That, for some purpose, doubtless *wise*,
Had hid from quite as worthy eyes,
The light that even in weeds there lies.

For blind's the soul—yea, verily, *blind*,
Which fails to note, on every wind,
A something sent to light the mind.

From star to flower—from flower to clod—
On heaven's blue floor—on earth's green sod,
Whatever is, is love from God.

And we have walked by wondrous ways,
Where, surely, lights have filled our gaze,
Enough to flood all after haze.

We've stood and felt, by Horeb's hill,
As if that mountain mirrored still
THE HOLY ONE of Israel.

We've seen the waters—heard their roar,
That rolled the flower of Egypt o'er,
While Israel safely lined the shore.

The blushing waters now, though tame,
Their Jacob, though a child of shame—
Their FIERY PILLAR's still the same.

We feel His power—we felt it then—
Oh, may He lead who only can,
That Jacob to his God again.

We saw the Jordan's typic tide,
The flowery Canaan, like a bride,
With glory girt on every side :

For, to the eye of faith appears,
On almost every leaf it rears,
Some halo of the God-man's tears ;

That faith reveals in radiant hand
To all who, building not on sand,
Through Jesus, seek the BETTER LAND.

Yea, seeking sleep, we've laid us down
 Where Jesus bled, our souls to crown—
 Yea, all the fires of woe to drown.
 Oh, if the past had e'er the power
 To mould the future, man or flower,
 That past, *our present* well should dower.
 Let memory guard its scenes with care,
 That each may yield unceasing pray'r,
 That not in vain, we wandered there—
 That when we with that river meet,
 Which all must cross with naked feet,
 The tide may be both shoal and sweet—
 That, as we trod the typic Rest—
 The earthly Canaan, east and west,
 So we, that *brighter* of the BLEST,
 May hold in view—may enter, when
 He deigns to lead, who only can,
 Our God, in Christ!—Amen! Amen!

W O R K.

INSCRIBED TO A DESPONDING FRIEND.

THE World has hit you home, old Friend ;
 What then—abuse the world ?
 What man ere knew the same to mend
 Because *his* lip was curled ?
 Who ever knew, by sigh or groan,
 A broken heart made whole ?
 Ah, he who sighs for self alone
 Sighs for a worthless soul.
 The brave man's wound
 Is only found
 His ardour to renew ;
 So scathe and scorn,
 When guiltless borne,
 Right noble work may do.

If flowers, nursed by morning hopes,
Be nipt before their noon,
Shall we, down sorrow's sunless slopes,
Go hum the craven tune :
Success below is but for him
Whose conscience means his will ;
With whom all virtue's but a whim,
And life a game of skill ;
Who sneers the same
At praise or blame
When *won's* the end in view ?
Ah no, my friend,
For every hand
There's grander work to do.

Who ne'er an enemy hath made,
Nor seen a smile get *dry*,
Could scarce, though girt in di'mond braid,
Be value for a sigh.
Let knavery, then, his pewter mould
To what the hour demands,
But honest Truth—you be the gold,
Whoever shies or stands.
So when, poor Right,
Its ban and spite,
Some Wrong would wreak on you,
Look out ! look up !
The bitterest cup
Right healthful work may do.

Who has not felt upon his head
Some would-be ruin wrought,
Where honest worth, like daily bread,
Could not be sold or bought ?
Ah, such *may* feel the fire and flood
Of some small tyrant's whim—
Some ravening vanity, whose food
Could not be forced from him ;

But in the end
The truest friend
That e'er such sufferer knew,
Than Wrong and Whim
For Right and him
No grander work could do.

Who has not felt, or far or near,
Such blights pursue his tread,
To slay his friendships, ear by ear,
Where'er they raised a head.

What then ? Though withering here or there
Beneath their boom and blast,
The Living God shall purge the air,
And give us health at last.

So, say we, go !
Each paltry foe,
Whom *Worship* might subdue ;
But honest limbs
Bend not to WHIMS—
They've grander work to do !

Where wrong applies to only *two*,
But *one* should feel aggrieved :
The wretch who gives the wrong should rue—
Not he who has received ;
For if, at times, a good man weeps—
His heart all rudely riven,
Such griefs are but the thorny steeps
Which good men mount to Heaven !
And so, my friend,
Till travail end,
Far up yon beaming blue,
Sing, oh, for right,
Put forth your might,
Where'er there's work to do !

This world of ours has day and night,
That seek a common goal—
And so our workings, dark and bright,
Seem needful for the whole ;

For, since the earth first tasted blood,
Some minor Calvary
Has reared, to serve some general good,
Its immolating tree !

So, more or less,
His kind to bless,
Is each Caiphas, too,
Who stirs the power
That sleeps some hour,
When grander work's to do !

Shall we be cumberers of the soil
That feeds us year by year ?
There is no hand too white to toil
Within its proper sphere ;
There is no hand should hold us back
Where duty points the way ;
There is no thong that should not crack
When laggards won't obey !

Then where is he
Whines, "What of *me*—
A mote in public view!"—
There's not a hand
In all the land
Without its work to do !

Shall we await, then, here or there,
Some slip of fortune's wheel,
When each who breathes the common air
Should aid the common weal—
Or mope and weep, while o'er our ills,
Some Nabal mouthes his sneer,
Or young Excelsior, on the hills,
His death-songs sing so clear ?
Ah, no, my friend !—
Till travail end,
Far up God's beaming blue,
The humblest hand
In all the land
Has got its work to do !

SAINT ANSER.*

Written while the writer was President of the local Literary Club known amongst its members as "The Friends of Saint Anser," and inscribed to the select few who, as brethren thereof, met together *weekly*, for the purpose of free inquiry and discussion in such literary matters as were deemed capable of affording entertainment and instruction.

WHILE trumpets blare, and thunders roll,
And slaughter stalks from pole to pole ;
While still the iron-hearted Might
His sabre yields o'er bleeding Right,
And shouts of conquests climb the air
Like spirits of that *otherwhere*,
With blood-stained feet up God's blue stair—

Be ours, my friends, the nobler choice
To seek the lovely, pure and true,
To win wherein the saints rejoice,
And laud the aids to win it too—

The fruitful tongue that *needs* no voice—
That *hath* no voice, yet speaks so free
Of what God willed, and so shall be—
Our Earth's far holier destiny !
The tongue, whose ebon moisture flows
Up hills of song, o'er vales of prose,
Producing fruit where'er it goes—
That fiery fruit so fell to those
Who would the soul's advance oppose—
The fairest fruit that culture knows,
The noblest fruit Creation grows !
The tongue bequeathed for nobler ends
By good Saint Anser to his friends—
The tongue so long and justly prized,
Ere yet our Saint was canonised ;
Then hail, Saint Anser, men, with me,
And Anser's friends, where'er they be !

O, Anser good ! O, Anser mild !
How rare, in cities, such to see !
His heart was lowly as a child,
And lowly, too, was his degree—

* Anser—A goose.—*Lexicon.*

Nor knight, nor squire, nor priest was he,
Although, at times, in *certain ways*,
 He was *a-kin* to all the *three*—
But, that's a tale so tipt with haze,
We pass it by till brighter days.
And though *not quite* a minstrel born,
He bravely twanged the *native horn* ;
And though his solos, *some* might say,
Were not the noblest in their way,
In Nature's general orchestra
Each note subserved some general law ;
While all he uttered spoke the heart
At war with all pretentious art ;
 And though, perhaps, no *master-mind*,
He had his mission, as have we ;
 And o'er his acts we must be blind,
If, searching well, we *fail* to see
 The humblest here may serve his kind,
If but as true to Truth as he !
Oh, might we only, in our sphere,
Act each as fearlessly sincere,
Right happy were our World's *To-be* !—
Then Anser's memory, men, with me,
And Anser's friends, with "three-times-three!"

Saint Anser was a pilgrim wight,
 Most reckless of established forms !
A gray surtout, or often *white*,
 Was all he wore to hide his charms ;
And as to Anser's being polite—
 However sad, it must be said,
 Through all our light around him shed,
He never saw the meaning quite—
Yet scarce a house amongst our grand,
Or scarce a table in our land,
 By him had been unvisited.
And yet he ne'er could understand
Our wiser form for feelings bland,
But still to Friendship's proffered hand,
 He slyly, snivelling, stretched his *head* !

He could not see, in sooth, nor *I*,
The love supposed to underlie
This shake-of-hand philosophy !
What then ? For all defects of sight,
Be it ours to court a larger light !—
So Anser trudged, a pilgrim wight,
With naked head, and naked feet,
Through Summer's sun and Winter's sleet,
Companion of the hills and glens,
Acquainted less with *pence* than *pens* ;
And did, as saints had done before,
Deeds superhuman o'er and o'er !
Now soared he o'er the tallest woods ;
Now, like a spirit, walked the floods,
Or *stood*—perhaps for some vast sin !
Upon his sainted head therein ;
Or, moved by motives near his core,
He gravely plumbed the waters o'er,
Which sneerers, with their graceless scowl,
Pronounced a freak “Upon the prow !”
But which was neither less nor more
Than zeal to test a power he bore
Of turning fishes into fowl—
A pleasant fancy in its way,
With this advantage, sages say,
It made the Saint both plump and gay !

Now, though we may not imitate
His large contempt for polished forms,
'Twere well we would not overrate
The language of our hands and arms ;
This too-much *form* besides, I ween,
Not only wounds the common sense,
But oft, in wordy times, is seen
To wreck her tent and drive her thence.
And full as oft, I think, hath been,
A death to social confidence—
Suppose no *worse* the consequence !

It chills the soul of friendly union,
And hangs a clog on free communion !
And though our gifts be so confined,
 We can't, with Anser, foot the flood,
Or lay a limb across the wind,
 As 'twere some garron of our stud ;
Or plumb the wavelet's silver fleece,
 Upon the good Saint Anser's plan,
And change our fish to ducks and geese—
 Yea, *something* of this *last* we can :
The fact is not at all uncommon—
 Ye've seen it, friends, and so have I,
When Snooks was set behind a salmon,
 Some "Dear wee duckie," smiling by,
The charm began with mastication,
 And needs no further explanation !

All such, apart, though it be true
Much Anser did we cannot do,
 And much, perhaps, we should not try,
One truth, we still should hold in view,
 We've power to *walk*, if not to *fly* !
And when the way to virtue leads
Though many a thistle o'er it breeds,
Till many a weary foot there bleeds,
There's still some flower among the weeds
 To glad the pilgrim's jaded eye ;
Thereon, let each put forth his power,
 Regardless of the sneerer's scorn,
He'll find it brightening, hour by hour,
 As midnight doth to golden morn—
Put forth his power, by sea or shore—
Lo, he who on the winds did soar,
And work such marvels by the score,
As seldom Saint had worked before,
Our mighty Anser did no more ;
 But did it still, as brave hearts ought,
With such an honest recklessness
 Of what the *groundlings* said or thought,

As few have language to express,
But every honest tongue shall bless,
 Till honest hearts be things of nought,
 Or, for a breakfast sold or bought !
Oh, hence with pilgrims such as we,
Our semi-cynic Saint shall be
Long voiced with “three-times-three !”

I've said our Saint was meek and mild,
Yet Anser was not *all* a child,
 Nor quite made up of beck and bow ;
But prided oft in certain things,
Whereof the kingly Psalmist sings,
 But Messrs. Orme will not allow—
For instance, he'd a *princely* sense
 Of what was due to him and his,
And so indulged at some expense
 Of “Gech” and “Gobble,” “Whirr” and “Whiz,”
In certain acts of self-defence,
 That paid his quizzers quiz for quiz.
His attitudes were *striking* too,
And yet, perhaps, in no wise new :
A cautious, sideling, sort of pace—
 A wearing on you now and then ;
With head advanced, in feeling grace,
 And what those nobly-muscled men,
“The Fancy,” finely term “Half-face”—
 So faced he often, nine or ten—
So, head erect and neck bent low,
Some little like an Indian bow,
He slipped a sly one on the foe,
Or squared about, and watched his blow ;
But even when he deemed it death,
He merely whistled 'neath his breath—
I've heard such whistle called a *hiss*—
'Tis not particular, that or this—
It shows how he, in hate and love,
Combined the serpent with the dove !

But when his foe was driven oft,
Oh how he rose with chuckling laugh,
And shut the Saint awhile from view
By sundry flaps of his surtout !

In truth Saint Anser nursed some whims,
As very likely, friends, do we ;

That would not serve our special hymns,
Or much improve our Psalmodie ;

But if they teach us to forbear,

Where each of weakness hath his share,
They've something good, as one may see—
They've this, besides, they whisper me :

For men of common lips and eyes ;
Of common acts and sympathies ;

He's far too good who's *always* wise !
Then hail, Saint Anser ! Long may he
Have friends to greet him warm as we !

Saint Anser's tastes were not impure—
At least he was no epicure :
Earth's sumptuous fare he held in scorn ;
His choicest feast a sheaf of corn ;
And then along some brooklet's rim
He moped and mused, and shaped his whim ;
And sipped the flood and " keched " his song,
Contented as the day was long—
His briskest, too, when trudged him by,
Such poor Anserculus as I—
Till so it fell, one Christmas-tide,
A martyr to the *times* he died—
A martyr to the fearful law
That opes the deadly canine jaw—
Still redolent of carnivora—
To fill the pious Christian maw !
Oh, how it wounds the finer sense,
To speak such murderer's *why* and *whence*—
His *plumpness* was his whole offence !
At Christmas-tide, in Christian land,
He bled beneath a Christian hand—

He bled ? Ah, who could understand
The nature of the heart that planned
The death of one so simply grand—
So meek, and, even in war, so bland !
He bled ? Ah, well !—it *was* to be ;
And who shall war with fate's decree !
He bled ; but, lo ! as martyr, he
Bequeathed his robe for such as we—
Then here's that robe, with “three-times-three !”

The robe—the robe ! great Anser's robe !

Ah ! out of weakness cometh strength !
Behold, its hem shall scourge the globe ;
Shall cleanse it through its breadth and length ;
Shall give the thoughts of thinkers wings,
To reach the height and depth of things—
Shall pour the light of larger souls
Where'er the wave of error rolls—
Shall upwards lift the brow of man,
And ope his mind to nobler span ;
For, lo, that robe shall yield the wand,
Which yet, in some Arch-Wizard's hand,
Shall from the grief extract the smile,
As Spring doth roses from the bri'r—
Shall strike the kingly from the vile,
As from the flint the steel strikes fire ;
Shall strike, shall *write*, and shall not spare
Where'er Corruption hath his lair ;
From lowliest hut to highest hall—
God's *mene Tekel* on each wall,
Till all be purged, and man, set free
From guilt and grief, at last shall see
O'er every clime,
As in the dawn of time,
From hill to flood,
Lighting the near and far,
Like a great fixed star,
The one word—Good.

Then greet Saint Anser, friends of mine,
 The name, *as name*, is but an empty sound ;
 But, lo ! the sound may be a sign,
 That where we sit is not unholy ground !—
 That we—albeit so lowly in our line,
 With neither wing nor wish to pass the bound,
 Beyond whose circle looms the unknown Profound,
 May be the nucleus of a light divine,
 Which one day fair and far-a-field may shine
 O'er some waste spot or little flowery mound—
 On some lone tendril of the living Vine,
 Whose purple light, by hoary shadows drowned,
 May snatch some vigour from the Stranger shine ;
 Till, bursting through the worse than night
 around,
 It grow in beauty, like a soul new-crowned—
 A holy radiance, vital as benign—
 To glad the old glooms with intellectual wine—
 Then hail Saint Anser's friends with NINE-TIMES-NINE !



LITTLE SILKIE DOWN.

Lines written in a child's copy of the popular Nursery Tale, "Little Red Ridinghood."

LITTLE maiden of the now ;
 Sunny tress and snowy brow ;
 Sinless of a frown ;
 Thou wilt not regard it crime
 At this holy Christmas time
 If the minstrel breathe a rhyme,
 Less to build renown
 Than a love of Love sublime,
 In a little tinkling chime,
 Meet for Silkie Down.

Listen, then—through wolf and wood,
 All this little "Ridinghood,"
 Runs a moral clear ;

This it teacheth, through and through,
When a *work* thou *hast to do*,
Flower nor butterfly pursue,
 Lest there should appear—
Little dreamt of till in view—
Wolfish things to make thee rue
 When no “Woodman’s” near !
Tell me not our wolves are dead ;
Tell me not each floweret spread
 Moor and meadow roun’,
Far from evil’s shape or sign
Nurtured was by Power divine
O’er some little brow to shine
 ‘Scaping from the town ;
Or for tiny hands to twine
Free from sin and care as thine,
 Little Silkie Down !

Ah, the wolves are with us still—
Many, if invisible—
 Silkie Down, *beware* !
If amongst the flowers we run,
While *one* duty’s left undone,
Snows may fall amidst our sun—
 Snows of killing care !
Wolves may tear our flesh anon—
Wolves that feast the soul upon—
 Wolves of heart-despair !

But those starlets of the sod ;
Odorous autographs of God !
 Who would dare revile ?
There the soil its spirit shows,
Cold in these, or warm in those,
Yea, in action and repose,
 Teaching, too, the while,
As the soil its season knows,
So should each who o’er it goes,
 Where and when to smile !

Oh ! through every sun and shade,
May'st thou ever, little maid,
 Meekly, promise-ward,
Wear thy crown of flowers or briars,
Touched by no unhallowed fires—
Ravening wolves of earth's desires—
 Which the weak retard :
So may He who never tires,
Walking where thy soul requires,
 Be her sleepless guard !

Keep thy white from every fang,
Which on every white would hang,
 Reckless pray'r or groan—
Till the vice, becoming wise,
Sink his storm of serpent sighs :
Or, from having missed the prize,
 In more guileful tone,
Makes it seem in other eyes,
What, in neither form nor guise,
 Could he in his own !

Fit that brow, so pearly fair,
With its wreath of golden hair,
 For an angel's crown !—
Keep those eyes of heavenly blue,
Free from sorrow's fiery dew,
Till the gates of jasper through,
 Where, when fairly foun',
In our Lord's Jerusalem New,
We may meet, and know we do,
 Little Silkie Down !



A SEPTUAGENARIAN TO HIS WIFE,
ON THE FIFTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR MARRIAGE.

INSCRIBED TO A. C.

CHEER up, sweet wife ! Once more the day—
The dear old *fifth* day of *July* !—
Has met us on our Homeward way—
We should not coldly pass it by !
'Tis fifty years, this day, and four,
Since you and I were made as *one* ;
And if our walk be nearly o'er,
Sweet wife, our FATHER's will be done !

Through good and ill preserved we've been—
We've had our pleasures and our pains—
Yea, many a cloud, sweet wife, we've seen,
But *none* without its golden veins !
Our coldest day, or darkest night,
If wet with tears, *was* met and *borne*,
Till now, in life's sweet Autumn light,
We meekly wait Christ's harvest morn !

If some from round our hearth be miss'd,
We've children still, with home and food,
Yea, children's children have we kiss'd—
Ah, God, sweet wife, has been *so* good !
Have *we* to Him been all we might ?
Hush ! Lay your head here on my breast,
And whispering meekly—God is light,
With Him, we've trusted, leave the rest !

And now, sweet wife, stir up and show
Our children and our children's friends
That sweet old smile of long ago,
Whose light, with all its odds and ends,
A *guiding* light was still to me,
When anxious heart and aching brow,
Much needed all the light could be,
And had it in that smile as now !

That smile as now!—that blessed beam!
Though hallowed still the light it bore,
While gazing thus, as in a dream,
It never seemed so bright before!
And fifty-four long years have pass'd
Since wifeful smiles I feasted on,
And still, if this should be our last,
Sweet wife, our Father's will be done!

SUN AND SHADE.

STRIKE up that dear old tune again,
My cheek is thin, my hair is gray;
My ear has lost yon pleasant strain,
The spirit used to sing alway,
When fair or foul the month was May!
Ah, me! that hearts should so decay,
With still enough of feeling left,
To tell of what they've been bereft!

Strike up! ah, strike the chords again,
Bring back the days of long ago!
There's still some corner in my brain
Unwithered by this outward snow,
Whereto your songs of joy or woe
May talk of *some* we used to know,
And fetch to Fancy's eye once more
What only Heaven can, else, restore!

AUTUMN FRUIT.

I WALKED in the light that shines but when
All worldlier lights have passed away;
When dreaming spirits of minstrel men
Are tipt by the gleams of eternal day—
I walked where, methought, I had walked before,
And the sun of the Past shone out once more!

I walked o'er a flowery and pleasant wold,
And looked on the Olive was once my pride ;
Its leaves were crisp with the frosted gold
Of the grandly mellowing Autumn tide ;
But flower or fruit it no longer bore,
And its birds of carol came there no more !

The nides were there, but the nidelings flown ;
The mosses fed on each brawny bough ;
And lo, where the saplings tall had grown,
Arose but the loathlier fungi now,
Like a kingly soul in a serfly dress,
Even so was that tree in its loneliness !

I loved those boughs in whose goodly shade
My soul had sat in her sunnier day,
And sighed, as I saw the bright leaves fade,
“ The Winter cometh, and then decay !
Is there *no* fond eye to shed light thereon ?
Shall there *no* birds sing like the sweet birds gone ?”

’Twas a thought replied—’twas a phantom tone—
“ Take thou no care for the ills that seem !
If the morning birds with their songs have flown,
As sweet may come with the evening’s beam ;
For while life remains or in bough or root,
Shall the tree in his season yield his fruit !”

The heavens grew dark, and mysterious storms
On pinions *muffled* traversed the skies ;
And wintry ills, in a thousand forms,
Withheld the Olive-tree from my eyes !
’Twas an old-world’s Winter, of *ices small*,
And my pleasant Olive waxed broad and tall !

And lo, as the season of flowers shone there,
The spirit of life, with whispers of love,
Awaked on our Olive ONE Blossom so fair,
With much like the lily and more like the dove,
While trembled the tree ’neath this gentle refrain :
“ The songs of thy morning shall greet thee again !”

J A N E .

Written in an Album inscribed with the name.

EACH tinted page—the brightest !
Behold, I've fingered by ;
And chosen this, the whitest,
Methinks you whisper “ Why ? ”
Ah, there's a name—the sweetest,
E'er tingled on my brain !
And *stainless white*'s the meetest,
To bear that blessed “ JANE ! ”

Yea, blessed—blest, for ever,
May all who bear it be !
For *one's* sweet sake who never
But blessings breathed on me—
Who shaped, in no o'erweening,
For childhood's brief refrain,
Her name to gentler meaning—
To holier, still, than “ JANE ! ”

The loves of earth are many,
And diverse as its flowers ;
But never Earth knew any
More holy than was ours !
And o'er my life's long story,
Where might some blot have lain,
Oft streamed a moral glory
From thinking, then, of JANE !

But loves, however holy,
Dissolve along the years ;
And, *love*, how oft 'tis solely
The seeds of future tears :
We sow them in our madness,
To root in every vein,
And reap but pain and sadness
Through some sweet word like JANE !

Still, though the grave's a gainer
 So oft at loving's cost—
 Though mind's a poor retainer
 Of loveliest sights when lost—
 Nor death nor life hath power
 To wipe from out my brain
 The odours of *one* flower,
 Whose name was written JANE.

O, name of names ! O, solace
 Of times that long have flown !
 The beauteous spirit palace
 That knew thee as its own,
 Behold, love-lit, love-lighting—
 My moon—my sun, again !
 I think I see, while writing—
 My MOTHER'S NAME WAS JANE !



THE SINGING BIRD.

"Fate," says Jean Paul Richter, "darkens the cage
 Of the singing bird, till he has been instructed in all
 The melodies she requires him to sing."

BIRD, from whose breast that wild river of soul is—
 Shaper of song for the Holy of Holies,
 Speak from the depths of the wood's darkest hangings—
 Speak through the mighty world's jubilant clangings,
 Say, while the ear in a heaven thou keepest—
 Say, is it true, while thou singest thou weepest ?
 "Even as night to the beautiful morrow,
 Sorrow's the nurse of song—suffering and sorrow!"

Breather of wild words ! Ah, musical dreamer—
 Gleaner of gladness, from darkness and tremor,
 Flee from the grasp that thy spirit encloses—
Thorns wouldst thou ever, that *some* might have *roses* ?
 What, though the night be the mother of glory,
 Brightness, once born, maketh golden the hoary ;

Come where the world shall have ears for thy gleanings—
Welcomes, too, deeper than words or their meanings !

Come, with thy soul of light, misery-blasted—
Come, in thy shivering white, moulting and wasted—
Come, with thy fitful glance, shrinkingly beaming—
Come, with thy melodies sparkingly streaming !
Song-bird, the Heaven-taught, never too lowly,
Hymn of the heart was, for welcomes all holy !
Flinging off night, come to day, in its glory—
World, how thou'dst welcome the bird and his story !

“ Hush ! Know ye not what the clever world teacheth :
‘ Deepen the woe, and the nobler it preacheth !
Strew ye the flints around, rougher and rougher ;
Suffering *must* sing—and hence, singing *must* suffer—
Warmer wakes love from the cold bed of scorning,
Lustier, from night, leaps the song of the morning,
Singing hearts sicken where light streameth ever !’
So saith the clever world ! Ah, the world’s clever !

“ Lo ! if that world, while it rolls and rejoices,
Darken the cage for its *noblest* of voices,
Wherefore should bird of the frailest song-powers—
Meant for, at proudest, but moon-light and flowers—
Dazed, from his dark, grope with song to the city,
Clique-kinging there, without justice or pity—
Credo a god, too, who every strain smothers,
Saving it breathe *his* rebuke to all others ?”



THE TEST.

A SONNET.

HER soul, beneath her flushed eye’s ebon bow,
A moment battled with the blank of space,
Till all the moonlight glory of her face,
Deepening to day-dawn—thus, she whispered low :

“ If seeming friend suspicion points as foe—
 A mere lip-lover, heartless, hollow, base ;
 His truth or guile, flame-written, mayst thou trace
 On those who know thee, but as he may show !
 And, mark—suspicion hath been *base* as blind.
 If those a free, unsneering, candour guide—
 If the reverse, suspicion hath not lied ;
 A pointed reed, to worship every wind—
 To *kiss* thee faceward, and to *stab* behind,
 Shall prove that vampire, in thy friend, desried ! ”

G E N T L E N E S S .

A SONNET.

BENEATH a sweet simplicity, you say
 A *cunning* burrowed, you were slow to find—
 Alas ! self-worship maketh poor SELF blind ;
 In that pure gentleness of soul that they
 Of bloodiest lash could ne'er quite scourge away,
You saw but evidence of baby mind.
 Though God, in flesh, was gentlest of our kind—
 Though souls of fire have slept in vapours gray—
 Then, if, when vexed, 'neath your imagined might,
 The taunt that told he could nor see nor feel—
 His spirit, mounting to her native height,
 With bolted laughter crashed your selfhood's steel—
 Call it not *cunning*, but a strength sublime,
 That bore till gentleness became a crime !

SONG OF THE FLOOD.

O HEARKEN, ye haughty of flesh and blood,
 Saith the toiling, boiling, brown-browed flood :
 Pride maketh the spirit of man to swell—
 It maketh the waters at times, as well ;

And, oh, should'nt we, in our march, be proud,
 Begot of the hills, and born of the cloud—
 Here surging and sapping—hurra ! hurra !
 Your yesterday's slave is the lord to-day !

Oh, lightly ye thought of us, flesh and blood,
 Saith the roaming, foaming, brown-browed flood,
 When curbed by your cunning, we whined by your
 side,

Bloated your coffers, and pampered your pride,
 Shattered and scattered, we dared not refuse,
 Being used and abused as it fitted your views ;
 But, surging and sapping—hurra ! hurra !
 Your yesterday's slave is your lord to-day !

Your cunning, behold, was a mocking knave,
 Who shivering flees from his swarthy slave—
 From the tawny, brawny, *base* in his sight,
 But king of the course when the word's "Unite!"
 Puny and pallid while piling your wealth,
 But freedom gives spirit, and spirit is health—
 Hence, surging and sapping—hurra ! hurra !
 Your yesterday's slave is your lord to-day !

Then, learn ye a lesson, O, flesh and blood,
 Saith the reeling, wheeling, brown-browed flood :
 Though there be waters that bear, and forbear—
 Restraining the might that could carry them—WHERE ?
 Surfs are not *ever* so silkenly bred—
 Lead them in love, as you'd like to be led,
 Lest, surging and sapping, their wild "Hurra!"
 Ring over the wreck of the right some day !



CLINK—O—CLINK.

CHORUS :

CLINK—O—Clink !
 Clinkum, clinko, clink !
 Lay on ! lay on the iron 's hot—
 We've got no *time* to think !

The anvils ring,
 The sledges sing
 Clink—O—clink !
 Clinkum, clinko, clink !
 Ah, labour yet shall ease this chain,
 Or rend it link from link !

Clink, O, clink ! Clinkum, clinko, clink !
 True brothers of the anvil, *who* says we cannot think ?
 Oh, tell the vile traducers, or low of state, or high,
 Their tale is, like their love of *right*, a blank and selfish lie ;
 Ay, ring it from the ploughshare, or from the ruddy bar.
 We fashion to the sickle, when needed not for war !
 Ring it till the people have taken up the tone,
 And labour, regal labour, bends his iron limb to none,
 For hear, O hills around us—your every holy sod—
 Great labour's brow
 Should never bow
 To meaner than his God !
 Shout it through each alley, clinkum, clinko, clink !
 Liberty to seem a *man* who knows to work and think !
 Clink—O—Clink ! Clinkum, clinko, clink !
 Lay on ! lay on, the iron's hot, &c.

Clink—O—clink ! Clinkum, clinko, clink !
 Life is here a furnace—we panting o'er its brink !
 Moiling and broiling thus, for aye, in sweat and coom—
 Wearing so the Adam curse, wear we it for whom ?
 Ah, well ! for *some* who well deserve the noblest man
 could do—
 With whom the only failing is—their numbers are too few !
 But *some* who greet our givings with a cold, unholy frown,
 Ah, *some* who never lift a hand unless to hold us down !
 Who mock the minds that made them *men*—that raised
 them from the mire !
 How good is God
 Who spares the rod,
 That *some* so much require !

Shout it from each hill-top—clinkum, clinko, clink—
Labour yet shall ease this chain, or rend it link from link !

Clink—O—clink !

Clinkum, clinko, clink !

Lay on ! lay on ! the iron's hot—
We *can*, but *dare* not, think !

The anvils ring—

The sledges sing

Clink—O—clink !

Clinkum, clinko, clink !

Ah, labour yet shall *ease* this chain,
Or rend it link from link !

THE WEIRD MANTLE.

Air—The Wee Mantle.

The little air to which the following lines have been written is remarkable for its sweetness, simplicity, and a certain wild pathos, which it ever retains, no matter how light or jocular may be the words accompanying it. The air is a particular favourite in many of the rural districts of Ulster—indeed, in all of them that the writer of this has had an opportunity of knowing ; but the only verses now generally extant in connexion with it must—to judge from a single stanza with which he has been favoured by a friend—be of the most objectionable character. In the following attempt to provide something more worthy of the melody—something, at least, more in accordance with the wants or demands of the present generation—it has been considered judicious to retain what appears to have been the original feature as represented by the word “mantle,” so that thoughts and expressions which can no longer be desirable, may the more readily be absorbed in those which aim at a purer sentiment or idealism.

THE moon, from o'er Collin,

Cold-silvers the air again :

But take my blue mantle—

'Tis warmer than nine or ten !

Fair fall the dew !—down in the dew,

Where primroses, now and then,

Gleam to the moon—up to the moon,

Like stars from M'Cance's Glen !

Oh, I have a mantle

That's tinted nor blue, nor gray ;

But flushed as the heavens are

While dying 's a summer day :

Fair grow the flowers ! all through the flowers,
That mantle be mine for aye—
Though in the dew—down thro' the dew,
It keep no cold airs away !

This mantle, by holy
As well as by hidden law,
Has streamed over maidens
Since Virtue first feared a flaw,
Till, thro' the flowers—down thro' the flowers,
The whitest cheek e'er you saw,
Quivered in red, till it had bled
If touched with a windle-straw !

How fair such a mantle
O'er her who well uses it !
How dimmed is her beauty
Whose seared heart refuses it !
Down in the dew—under the dew,
Where no one abuses it,
Better should sleep—better than weep—
The poor thing who loses it !

Then fair fall the mantle—
The holy—the Heaven-lent—
The cheeks' sudden scarlet
From young hearts, still innocent !
Down thro' the flowers—up thro' the towers,
A watch-light divine 'tis sent—
Long may its rose shield while it shows
The purer soul's tenement !

Then, love, be your mantle
The sun of my brightest day ;
Your breast's snow and azure
Its heaven, too, and mine, I pray !
Fair fall the dew ! down in the dew,
May primroses list our lay,
Till every curl, black as the merle,
Be white as the milky-way.

THE PEASANT PRINCE OF SONG.

(Written for the anniversary meeting of the "Sheffield Burns' Club.")

The following lines were written—not in competition with others, but by the special request of a friend about to visit Sheffield at the time. The writer desires here to answer frequently enquiring friends, *one for all*, by stating that he never wrote a *line* of competition verse in his life—never paid any attention to invitations, during the Centenary of this or that Poet, desiring him to win a gold watch, or other valuable—perhaps a double-breasted wig, with long sleeves in it, by his "exceeding cleverness!"

With light and white another year
Hath gilt and strown our bawns and bowers,
Since last we met as meet we here
To scent the ploughman's peerless flowers ;
To triumph in the deathless dead—
The bard—the muse-anointed,
With holly crown and berries red,
A priest and prince appointed :
Oh, here's his name, nor that alone,
It's light o'er earth expanding—
With upward eye—with solemn tone—
With tearful lid—and standing—
The poet's memory pass along,
Old Scotland's peasant prince of song.

And what though prickly was that crown
The wily queen of visions brought him,
To fence his brow, with frown for frown,
When Fate her darkest donned, it taught him.
And lo, since ceased his worldly wars,
'Mid time's consuming carry,
Around his name, like flashing stars,
Expand both leaf and berry.
The bard of bards, whose wizard words,
As pain or pleasure tone them,
Assail our souls like flaming swords,
Or half in glory throne them ;
The friend to right—the foe to wrong ;
Our Burns—our peasant prince of song.

The priest—the prophet—man, and child,
Who Nature's heart, in gloom and gladness,
Perused—adored till soul grown wild,
 Hymned heart, and heave in holy madness,
The dark-eyed seer, whose tongue of fire
 Yet peals from earth to heaven ;
Who on his plough-beam found a lyre,
 That thrones could not have given ;
Who clothed blue misery like a bride,
 When worth her tears attended ;
Who o'er the cotter's “Ingle-side”
 A halo broad suspended,
His memory proudly pass along—
The man—the peasant prince of song.

Ah, think, ye who each weakness ban,
 'Mid toil and tears and station lowly ;
How much he's more than *common* man,
 Who wins the crown or keeps it holy,
Too oft a heartless sneer above—
 A green-eyed few beneath him—
Who, for his free-flung light and love,
 A crown of scorpions wreath him.
All praise to Coila's kingly son—
 The wearied, worn, and wounded—
Whose soul when fiercest frowned upon,
 Her holiest timbrel sounded,
His memory—chant it loud and long—
The high-souled peasant prince of song.

He passed—his life an Autumn field,
 With golden sweets and glories gifted ;
And whose so few of tares might yield,
 If half so long or closely sifted.
But they who pierce through life and death,
 To make our faults *uncommon*,
'Twere little ill, their blighting breath
 Were yielded high as Hammon.

Till honest worth assumes her throne,
 And thus—a world commanding—
 With upward eye, with solemn tone,
 With tearful lid, and standing,
 The poet's memory hymns along—
 Old Scotland's peasant prince of song.

GO SLEEP.

Written for Mr. Walter Newport.

THE sun hath gone down, and the day round us closes,
 The winds are asleep, and the birds gone to nest,
 The moon's in the sky, and the dew's on the roses,
 Then why should not baby go sleep, like the rest !
 Go sleep, oh, go sleep, then, my white one, my bright one,
 The city lights languish, and yonder and nigh
 Thy father's foot soundeth, the quick one, the light one,
 Thank Heaven the weary day's labour is by !
 Go sleep, then, my darling !

And while o'er thy cheek steal the roses of slumber,
 Illumed by the dews from a fond mother's eye,
 My beauty, my darling, shall wings without number,
 Descend, as thy shield, from our Father on high !
 Ah, where shalt thou sleep, or what eye shall watch o'er thee
 When these of thy mother have passed with the years ?
 Thy day and thy way, oh, they brighten before me—
 An angel of mercy forbiddeth my fears !
 Go sleep, then, my darling !

L O N E L I N E S S .

I DREAMT in thy absence one moon I could linger ;
 Ah, dreams ! they were false as the hopes of the singer ;
 The night cometh on and my soul waxeth lonely,
 Its brightness—its blackness—art thou, and thou only,
 Ah ! why didst thou leave me, love—why didst thou leave me ?
 Why whisper'dst thou not that my dreams would deceive me,

To gaze on thy vacant chair, meekly and mildly ;
 Ah, darling !—I loved thee too warmly—too wildly.
 Come, then, in the riches that poverty knoweth,
 While trusting the Love that all graces bestoweth,
 For, oh ! when the smiles of the big world beset me,
 To wile me, to win me, a-while to forget thee,
 Dumb anguish grows madness beneath their suborning,
 Thou moon of my night, and thou sun of my morning ;
 Oh ! black be the day, love, that ever shall let me,
 For earth, or earth's glory, one moment forget thee.

I dreamt of thee, blessed one—saw thee returning,
 And leaped forth to clasp thee, half happy—half mourning;
 I saw thy bright eyes, like the sun on yon river,
 In whiteness, through blackness, thy brow shone as ever,
 As some snowy hill from the cloud's darkness fringings,
 Gleams forth in the gliding moon's silvery tingings ;
 Oh ! through this black world, with that white moon
 above me,

My purest—my dearest ! I love thee—I love thee !

Dear light of my loneliness—lamp of my duty,
 Whose spirit is truth, as its dwelling is beauty,
 I see thee—I hear thee move by me, and bless me,
 Nor know it a vision till straining to press thee ;
 My heart-strings—my heart-strings are twined, love,
 about thee ;

Ah ! God only knows how they wither without thee,
 For through this lone world, with that white moon above me,
 My life-light—I'd wander to love thee—to love thee !

THE BRIDGE IN THE GLEN.

As we passed, on a sweet summer eve,
 O'er the white wooden bridge in the glen,
 'Twas some button of his caught my sleeve,
 And my heart—oh ! to think of it then,
 As backward and forward—again and again,
 I toiled to get free from that queerest of men.

But his voice was so clear and so sweet—

Though I knew not, I'm sure, what he said,
With his something of “Heaven to meet !”

As half weeping, I hung down my head—

You'd have thought, while he slowly our garments unwed,
'Twas that sweet little stream singing psalms in its bed !

Oh ! give love and the priest only leave,
And such Edens they'll plant yet-and-then !

As for me, when, now, caught by the sleeve,
Three cherubs lisp—“Mother, ah ! when

Shall father, that dearest (*not ‘queerest’*) of men,
Set an eve for yon sweet little bridge in the glen ? ”



D E S P O N D E N C Y.

BENMORE has plumed his darkest crest,

And grasps the ocean in his frown,
And rugged Rathlin's barren breast

Is veiled in clouds of dusky brown ;
Yea, e'en the blue—the beauteous blue,

That smiling Heaven wears in May,
Is crossed with fields of inky hue ;

But oh, my soul ! unlike to you

For those can weep their stains away !

I would, my soul, thou wert that tear,

Out from my blood-shot eye-ball press'd,
This wrinkled rock should be my bier,

That wand'ring wave might work the rest.

Oh ! could I change this hot despair

To language that my kind might know,
I'd lay my secret thought-springs bare,

I'd tell the world a tale of care

Would shroud the brightest cheek with snow.

The world ! alas ! cold stranger thing,

I've walked therein, but walked alone,
For, God had lent my soul a wing

To seek a dwelling near His own ;

But mingling much with kindred clay
Hath fouled—hath clogged those plumes of snow
That used to cleave a purer ray,
In higher hope—in brighter day
Than they again may ever know.

D E P A R T E D .

LONELY—lonely sat I musing
While the big red sun went down,
Sadly, sadly, sat I thinking,
While that rosy circle, sinking
In a waste of ruddy brown
Streamed a flickering current nigh me—
Through the window, twinkling by me,
Shot a sickly shaft that shone
Still and stark in ghostly splendor ;
Like a breath-stream, slant and slender,
While I thought, or whispered faintly :
Guard him, God, the gifted, saintly—
Guard the way he walketh on ;
Then, the echo of a whisper,
Through my spirit wailed—“ He’s gone ! ”

He, my friend of friends, the fondest,
Had but lately said “ Farewell ! ”
Pressed my hand, and looked me brightly,
Though his big voice trembled slightly—
And his twitched lips shimmered whitely !
Passed he, but, his footsteps fell
On my ear, like echoes risen
From abysses of a vision,
When the soul of thought, the hermit,
As the dream-land charmers charm it,
Starts to action energetic,
Ay, to utterance oft prophetic—
Then, as dew falls on the lawn,
On my musing ear as lightly
Fell that whisper—“ Yea, he’s gone ! ”

F A R A W A Y .

H.—H.—

IN MEMORIAM.

FAR away from the land of his home and his heart,
From the voices he loved, and their soothings, apart,
Soared a spirit as pure, from a temple as fair,
As with heaven and earth could mortality share ;
Then, oh, shall a bosom that trembles to tell
It had few—very few—worthy loving so well—
Shall a heart that doth feel to the springs in its core
It had few—very few—worthy mourning for more—
With a word to his worth—with a sigh to his tomb,
Through the wild harp he fondled, be chary to come ?

And though humble its strains, as the hopes of the bard,
They should sleep in his heart, and that heart 'neath the
sward,
Ere one note should be loosen'd in sycophant tone
O'er a shrine if made sacred by splendour alone ;
But the eye that would burn in contempt o'er a grave
Had its tenant wax'd vain on the groans of the slave,
And the chords that might ne'er be prostrated to wail
O'er a knave, though his gilding made heaven look pale
In their holiest source, may yield sorrow her sway,
O'er the mortal we're mourning as ashes to-day.

Oh ! if ever on earth, without danger to Right,
Could a soul have been vested with measureless might—
Or if ever true Dignity stooped from his place
To where lowliness lurked, with the God in his face,
With the whisper within—higher Art were to blame,
If he saw not the gem but by light from its frame—
And the virtuous spirit, of lowliest line,
May have somewhat to brighten a brighter than mine—
'Twas the soul that is gone : that is gone ! that is here,
Beaming yet to the eye—speaking yet to the ear !

For as, lustrous and fair, o'er the heavens are cast
The rich fragments of light when the day-beams are past,
So the thoughts of the pure round our souls linger on
When the spirits that shed them for ever are gone ;
Oh, and is it not soothing for pilgrims to find
Now and then through their visions those remnants of
mind

That declare how some Peerless had preached in the van
Of his proudest distinctions—" Man simply is man—
A frail temple of clay ; or, if more he appears,
'Tis by aught, under God, than the tinsel he wears."

With a love for aught pure that aught pure never sees,
From those schools whence your upstarts have ta'en their
degrees,

To look down on low earth whence their flight did begin,
With the cant that *low earth* must be wedded to sin,
And appeal to wealth's glitter, in absence of mind,
To exalt the poor *worm* where the *man* we should find.
He was here—he was there—dreading lofty nor low,
For his soul, like a lamp in a palace of snow,
Shed a light which, while wasting its beautiful shrine,
Was by grossness, itself, muttered—something divine !

Oh, and his was the eye of the holiest glow,
O'er tints of the fair, or above or below ;
'Twas an eye, that no beauty in nature or art
Ever met without fixing its print on his heart,
And a heart whose emotions grew actions, not words,
When the whispers of sorrow stole in through its chords,
And a heart that grew wild under feeling's eclipse
When the spirit of song passed her wing o'er his lips ;
And in science—what field for his search was too vast ?
While his gleamings he sprinkled like stars where he passed

Ye have read of Philanthropy—yea, may have seen
The angel as pure as she ever hath been,
In a garment of clay that retained through its snows
Some tints to acknowledge the earth whence it rose,

But so little of earth with his nature combined—
And that little, again, to its farthest refined,
Made a home for the holy things purer than e'er
'Twas my lot to meet oft, among speaker as fair ;
Oh, so wholly his heart was the love-spirit's throne,
On the weal of the world seemed the hopes of his own.

But from all earthly loves—sacred, pure, and apart—
In the innermost spot of his innermost heart—
Lived a love whence each holier thought took its tone—
Lived a feeling the angels might glory to own ;
'Twas the love of the *Patriot* sternly sincere—
Not the love that takes name from a sigh or a tear,
To be breathed in your ear and be dreamt of no more,
But the warm, lasting love that *true* sympathy rears
In the soul long-bedewed with her holiest tears.

And what though when straining for Liberty's shrine,
His path may have trended from yours or from mine—
Oh, it is not the *path* we should hallow or ban,
But the end or the *aim* in the heart of the man ;
For as Freedom, herself, is or darkness or light
As revealed through the spirit she vests with her might,
So e'en in idea she's gross or refined
Through the foul or the fair of the manifold mind ;
But so pure was the freedom our loved one adored,
When he bowed at her altar he bowed to the Lord.

But he's gone—in the Spring of his manhood ; he's gone
Ere his mind the full sheen of its strength had put on ;
While we strain towards the voice that yet roundly and
clear

With its phantom-like music deceiveth the ear,
And we ask for the form that delighted our eyes,
While the bleeding heart leaps as the spirit replies :
With the red on his cheek, with the white in his soul,
He hath fought the last battle—hath won the last goal ;
He's away where the pestilence withers no more—
Where the season of flowers and fruit, never o'er,
Make the bough beam as bright as the blossom it bore !

THE OUTCAST.

God bless yon young and beauteous moon,
 That skims the deep sky's midnight sea,
 She lights your mother's eyes, aroon,
 O'er all their worlds of wealth in thee ;
 Your pearly brow—your laughing stare—
 Your summer cheek and autumn hair.

Look up—look up, my babe, again ;
 My peerless, priceless hope—my more !
 And kill this fever in my brain,
 And all that's blistering at its core ;
 I would not lose one glance of thine
 For glittering India's richest mine.

It is not that my fancy's wild
 In dreaming, as thou'rt all mine own ;
 On lovelier face than thine, my child,
 The light of Heaven never shone.
 The world could not befoul my word,
 Were every tongue a slanderer's sword.



FRIENDSHIP.

O FRIEND of my heart, whom I've treasured so long,
 Of counsels so many and never one wrong,
 Whose love, like a halo, illumines my rhyme,
 Which not like to some I have met in my time.
 Whereby more than hate can a heart be perplexed,
 When an angel's one day, an affliction the next ;
 Oh, keep thou that medium can still be the same,
 That is never all ice—that is never all flame—
 Such only of Friendship deserveth the name.

TWILIGHT THOUGHTS:

A COUPLE OF MINUTES THEREWITH.

NO. I.

OLD—old to-day ! And yet how strange
The word, it seems so short a time since I
Was young !—so short a time since, at the foot
Of yon old garden where the current foamed
Beneath the willow-boughs—yea, boughs and roots
That, intermingling, spanned its murmuring breadth,
We sat—who sat ? Dear Lord ! the first time e'er
I sat within the light of woman's smile—
Of *any*'s, save the one whose soul-light broke
With such exceeding glory o'er my dawn
Of life, to set so soon—to set before
My day had even rounded towards the south ;
First loved, and yet not half so well as hers—
That other *her*—sweet Lord ! where is she now ?
If still beneath the stars, has she such thoughts
As mine, or turn they e'er, as mine, to yon
Old garden, where the willow-roots lay white
With snow beneath the freezing heavens, and that
Dear moonlight of her smile ? I never saw
A smile on lip—I never saw an eye—
I never heard a voice—a sound—an aught
That told me, I—yea, such a *thing* as I—
Could live, or should till then. Sweet dreams ! I hear
That whisper, even now—so low—so sweet—
So full of soul and quiet passion, say,
“Enough ! I am a *woman*—thou art yet
A child ! ” And then, I hear the rest—the sweet,
Sweet *all* that followed ; and I see, alas !
The bitter, bitter mode of that sweet all's
Fulfilment. Hush ! Away—away, and tear
The maddening picture to a thousand shreds—
Yea, blot the whole from my remembrance, oh,
Most merciful Redeemer, from the dark !

NO. II.

Why should I grieve to go ? Who's here to grieve
For me or for my going ? All my life—
A life not short—I've been a child. Who's here
To love a child—as childhood yearns to be
Beloved—when those who gave him being cease
To be ? I've been a child, I say, through life
Delighting in such things as few besides
Delighted in, and finding little that
Could yield delight to me in those wherein
Most others found their joy. Ah ! it is sad
To be a child, and all alone amongst
Those strong-eyed giants, full of iron years,
Whose glance can bow one's spirit to their knees—
Whose slightest breath is power, and breathed—how oft
Too roughly on the *children* of their kind !
Sad—sad to be the child who hears ring through
His dream the voice of stern utility,
Demanding manly power, while his is spent
Pursuing tinted spray among the waves
Of all—unprofitable thought. Sad—sad
It is, to be a child with still enough
Of mind to know when one is scorned, and heart
Perhaps to feel such scorn too deeply—yet
Without that apt metallic flash wherewith
The firmer soul can light the eye and say,
Beyond all power of words—“ Beware ! There's here
Can feel when wounded and repay in kind ! ”
And yet, with such retributory power
Would I be happier than I am ? God knows !
For me, I am a child, and know not what
Were best, save that I *think* 'twere good to go
And sleep that sleep of peace which even dreams
Are powerless to disturb. And yet I know
I could not lay me down and feel that there
I laid me for my last in life without
Much bitter grief ; for I have loved all things—
All things that in themselves revealed one trait

Of love, or beauty, which itself is love—
The abstract thing, for dimmer eyes made clear
In substance and in form. I've loved the wave
That threatened to destroy my life—the strange
Wild beauty of each curving plume, like some
White spirit worshipping the Lord, was more
To me then had it showered me to the knees
With diamonds—but o'er all, I loved it for
Its truthfulness to self. Ah, verily, there's
No beauty where there is no truth! Because
Of this same truth to self, I've loved, perhaps,
Too well for my soul's peace, some things it had
Been better to have loved much less, if loved
At all. But, let it pass! What matter what
I've loved! I know I've hated nought but hate
Of loveliness! Why even the savage beast,
Whose grandest stretch of thought is to destroy
All life to make his own more regal—him,
Ay, even him, I know I could have loved,
Though shunning to imperil my life in proof
Of love he could nor feel nor understand.
Ah, there are those who should, but cannot feel
Or understand it more than he! Alas!
How oft I've thought, and sometimes said as *now*--
Man metes his fellow by the line he finds
Within himself; while, all that lies beyond
That measure's length to him who measures seems
A blank, whereon, with cold presuming hand,
He writes the heartless word—"Pretension." Ah!
'Tis sad to be a child, to weep and talk of love
And hear the hoarse world mutter—"Where? Therefore
It is, I say—why should I grieve to go?
My full heart speaketh and my heart alone.
And so the voice is low and void of charm!
Vain Fancy speaks in artificial flowers,
But genuine Feeling seeks the simplest form.
Let her repeat it—Who's to grieve for me
Or for my going? Oh, to go in peace!

TO LADY F.—.

"And musing thus, it was far back among
 The years I had my dreams—my little dreams
 Of god-like freedom—human freedom!—not
 The freedom of a few—who, banding 'neath
 Some common name, do battle with all good—
 However good or ill alike, that on
 Its frontlet beareth not the party sign
 And seal! I loathed such freedom!"

—TABLET OF SHADOWS.

LADY, lady! once I knew
 A fiery youth of titles lowly,
 Stern as steel—as Heaven true,
 Of bounding hopes, and not unholy.
 Lady! he had love for thee,
 Ere he knew its sacred meaning ;
 Lady! I had eyes to see,
 Hadst thou shown some kindlier leaning,
 Flower and weed, as was his manner,
 Had been offered for thine honour.

Lady! when he sought thy care,
 'Twas not seeking wealth or power ;
 'Twas not sighing for a share
 Of thy dreamy lands or dower.
 Nor that frothy god, applause,
 Sought he e'er beneath thy banners ;
 More to him thy rightful cause,
 Than all thy glittering gold and honours.
 Thee and thine he sought to aid them,
 Means were his, and Heaven made them.

Lady! at thy fairest gate,
 Faithless lips and faithless sabres,
 Met the warm one's love with hate,
 Banned his truth, and truthful labours.
 Lady! all thine arbours through,
 Flashing fiery fangs around them,
 Loll the heartless green-eyed few,
 That bind your hopes, and oft have bound them.

Lady ! dream not love and bravery
Spring from such remains of slavery !

Lady ! oft that fiery boy,
Wandering past thy gleaming bowers,
Bent his iron hands to toy
O'er some wreath of way-side flowers,
Wove them—pressed them next his heart,
Kissed them—sent them warm before thee,
Token were they, but in part
Of the love his spirit bore thee,
Oh, he loved thee—loved thee truly !
But was paid with scorn as duly.

Thou, 'tis said, with pleasure smiled
On his gift, but, lady, hearken,
Slaves there were thy faith beguiled—
Made thine honest brow to darken ;
Flaunting 'daubed their wordy slime
O'er each leaf till streaked with poison,
Then his flow'rets, branded *crime*,
Waved they o'er the warm unwise one :
Yet their poison so designed it,
Cravens—only some might find it.

Lady ! there was truth to thee,
Slighting, blasting aught that loved thee ;
Lady ! thou hadst eyes to see,
And, e'er this had I reproved thee,
But I know his heart of hearts,
Though the sport of sorrow's many,
Still for thee, at fits and starts,
Bleeds and toils unknown to any—
This and more shall Time yet teach thee,
Oh ! 'tis Time the truth shall preach thee !

Lady ! I have said my say,
Know thyself, and mark thy vassals,
Lest thou find'st them stand some day
Less for thee than for thy castles ;

Know thyself, and also know
 Thou, that driver, yet and driven,
 Each his flower or weed shall show,
 'Neath the cloudless light of heaven,
 There when Time and Fate have fixed them,
 Men, perhaps, shall *judge* betwixt them !

POESY

THE poet arose at the break of day,
 And he saw the lark on her upward way,
 And his soul went up, the sweet bird above,
 With her holiest hymn to the Lord of love !

And the paling moon and the soft blue sky,
 Like the smile of God, met his musing eye,
 Till visions of purity round him stole,
 And shut out the world from his heart and soul.

The Poet walked in the fiery noon,
 Where the city lay white in the beams of June,
 And his soul looked up, and his heart looked down,
 Till his senses reeled in the glare of town.

That glare but deepened as day withdrew—
 The sun went down, and the minstrel, too !
 For the human heart that God had given,
 Still *smiled* on earth though it sighed for Heaven !

And songs went up from a Bacchanal band
 That lacked the love of the “ Promised Land ”—
 Till merriment 'rose on the midnight air,
 When the minstrel's laugh was the loudest there !

And my mind went back to that morning sky
 And the minstrel's hymn to its purity,
 And I sighed, “ Alas !” to behold it so—
 That a heaven-taught wing can descend so low !

Then softly and low as the voice that sings
When the soul of the violet opes her wings—
A voice there fell on my asking ear—
'Twas a *voice to feel*, not a *sound to hear*!

And it said, in a music sadly sweet:
" Since the heart of the earth first learned to beat,
The Maker, in wisdom, hath willed it so,
That the *boldest wing* should a *weakness* know !

" Thou seest but a part of the wondrous whole—
Tells the loudest laugh of the happiest soul ?
That manifold soul to the minstrel given
Hath shadows of earth through its light from Heaven !

" And none like the minstrel's heart *can* know
The depth of the wound when the wing drops low—
The feeling that *feels* the depth of its fall,
As a conscience-scourge, cuts deeper than all !

" As the lowliest voice in thine atmosphere,
Yea, even yon lark's, hath a grand work here,
So souls we have followed on heavenward wings
May have sipped, as the bird, from putrid springs !

" Who ever hath walked in a cloudless light,
Oh ! what knoweth he of the hues of night ?
How can he have *loathed*, to its grand excess,
What he never hath *felt* of unrighteousness ?"

And is it, I sighed, in querulous speech,
That the soul from sin may arise to teach ?
" Behold ! Our Father," the voice replied,
" By the means at hand shall be glorified."

Back through the Summers stole
Young Memory with Soul,
And 'midst the blighted ears,
That fed the famished years,
Whose names were on her scroll,
The twain sat down in tears.

A Spirit, winged with flame,
 Betwixt them went and came,
 And charged the passing hours
 With strange transforming powers,
 Till nothing seemed the same—
 The tears were changed to flowers !

There Soul knelt down and prayed ;
 Then with the flowers played ;
 The Spirit smiled, while she
 Exclaimed, half musingly,
 “ The light that’s caught from shade
 Alone is Poesy ! ”



THE HIND OF THE FOREST.

ENVY.

O FAIRY lore of fancy wrought,
 I turn with thee again to where
 One golden platter’s absence brought
 Such anguish to a Royal pair ;
 I see the grand baptismal feast—
 The infant Princess, and the sheen
 Of golden dishes—twelve at least !
 Alas ! Why were there not thirteen ?

Twelve mystic maidens range around—
 Twelve Fairies, by the King’s request ;
 But one there’s absent—I’ll be bound,
 Ye should have asked her with the rest !

Eleven have their gifts bestowed
 Upon the Royal babe, when, lo !

At once, the uninvited strode
 Amongst them with her words of woe :
 “ Yea ! beauty, virtue, and so forth,
 To her are given, as hath been seen ;
 My gift hath airs that savor North :
 The Princess dieth at fifteen ! ”

CINDERELLA :

FAITH, PATIENCE, AND HUMILITY.

ALONG the lanes of long-ago,
Where faith so much on Fancy leant,
'Tis pleasant still a glance to throw
If but to learn what Fancy meant
By all those strangely tinted dreams,
She gave such grand objective form,
And such a mystic life as seems
To keep to-day their pulses warm !

Hence, fairy lore, I turn with thee
To where, once more thou makest plain,
A truth, which some are slow to see,
Although 'tis old, to-day, as Cain !
A truth which saith—Wherever Heaven,
The light of beauty or of mind,
Hath in excess to mortal given,
Shall crowd the *envies* of our kind !

And yet, behold, there worketh still—
Albeit dim to flesh and blood—
A hand divine that shapes the *ILL*
Till every evil yields a *GOOD* !
Oh, hence, each Cinderell's reward,
For whereso' gift or grace there be,
The Power who gives, His gift shall guard,
If have the wearer *Faith* as she !

THE FISHERMAN'S SONG.

AWAY—away, o'er the feathery crest
Of the beautiful blue are we;
For our toil-let lies on its boiling breast,
And our wealth's in the glorious sea !

And we've hymn'd in the grasp of the fiercest night,
To the God of the sons of toil,
As we cleft the wave by its own white light,
And away with its scaly spoil.

Then, oh ! for the long and the strong oar-sweep
We have given, and will again !
For when children's weal lies in the deep,
Oh, their fathers *must* be men !

And we'll think, as the blast grows loud and strong,
That we hear our offspring's cries ;
And we'll think, as the surge grows tall and strong,
Of the tears in their mothers' eyes ;
And we'll reel through the clutch of the shiv'ring green,
For the warm, warm clasp at home—
For the welcoming shriek of each heart's own queen,
When her cheek's like the flying foam.

Then, oh ! for the long and the strong oar-sweep
We have given, and *must* again !
But when white waves leap, and our pale wives weep,
Oh, Heaven—Thy mercy then !

Do we yearn for the land, when tossed on this ?
Let it ring to the proud one's tread !
Far worse than the waters and winds may hiss
Where the poor man gleans his bread ;
If the adder-tongue of the upstart knave
Can bleed what it may not bend,
'Twere better to battle the wildest wave,
That the spirit of storms could send,
Than be singing farewell to the bold oar-sweep
We have given, and will again,
Though our souls *should* bow to the savage deep—
Oh, they'll never to savage men !

And if Death, at times, through a foamy cloud,
On the brown-brow'd boatman glares,
He can pay him his glance with a soul as proud
As the form of a mortal bears ;

And oh ! 'twere glorious, sure, to die,
In our toils for—*some*, on shore,
With a hopeful eye fixed calm on the sky,
And a hand on the broken oar !
Then, oh ! for the long and the strong oar-sweep—
Hold to it !—hurrah !—dash on !
If our babes must fast till we rob the deep,
It is time we had begun !

F L O W E R S.

FLOWERS that wave through the fringe, by the river—
Sun-drops of love ! I'd be with you for ever ;
Down where ye gleam, where the breezes have wrangled,
Flashes of light, by the grasses entangled—
Droppings of wings, that round Seraphim quiver—
Beautiful things, I'd be with you for ever !

Flowers that, fresh, holy, tearful and tender,
Halo-like, gird the round world with your splendour !
Ah ! knew ye how, 'mid your ever fresh comers,
Souls, city-sapp'd, through the long-shining summers,
Cloud-capp'd and harness'd, 'neath Mammon's gemm'd
sabre,

In dreams of you, droop on the dun fields of labour !

Flowers that flash thro' the hills' curling cover ;
Starry lamps hung thro' the halls of the plover ;
Pearling the heath, till it trembles, light-laden ;
Streams in its depths, like the eye of a maiden—
Wildly my soul, for the love-lore ye bring me,
Yearns for the psalm she's too sickly to sing ye !

Flowers that shine, o'er the hill-foot and valley !
Hark, how the blanched of yon death-breathing alley
Mutter, in dreams, the fierce dirge of their fathers :
“ God sendeth flowers ; but who, him that gathers ?
Types of the toiler—winged vigour and fleetness—
Winds of the hills ! bring ye not e'en their sweetness ? ”

Flowers that breathe, from the wilderness vernal,
Anthems of odour, to Silence eternal—
Far from the feet that might heedlessly trample
Aught in that holier Thought-spirit's temple !
Oh ! for a heart that, from God waning never,
Might, heavingly, hang o'er you ever and ever !

Flowers of earth, than night's sky-blossoms brighter—
God-written song, breathing still of its Writer !
Sweetly ye whisper, 'mid blushing and weeping :
E'en in a clod may some glory be sleeping.
Ah ! that such lessons of love should be wasted ;
Manna of spirits, how melt ye untasted !

Flowers that couch in the rude mountain grasses,
Types of the many that droop in the masses !
Cometh the day, when the light—when the power,
Scorned in the man, or withheld in the flower,
Flame-lipp'd shall preach, over Mammon's crashed sabre,
Christ once again, from the parched fields of labour !



MORN' AND NOON.

OH ! the crag and the cliff are robed in gray—
There's a curtain of gold round the brow of day,
And the moon, like the ghost of some world, doth show,
On the beautiful blue, her cheek of snow ;
 And a songless stream of air,
 The green wave's silvery hair,
Is flinging in curls, both left and right,
All fringed with the flame of departing light ;
And a languid note, on a homeward flight,
 Chants a sea-bird, here and there ;
But I dreamed a dream, and I saw a sight,
 That was twenty times more fair !

Yea, I dreamed—and a fairer moon arose,
And on skies more bright in their blue than those ;

And I stood where the bloom of the orchard trees,
In its sweets, was bathing an infant breeze,
 And a cot, like a cloud of snow,
 O'er a gleaming lake below,
Shone down, through the gold of the shelt'ring boughs,
Like a chieftain's bride, 'mid the clan of her spouse,
From an emerald mound, whose flow'ry brows,
 Through a snow-white paling —No !
But a silvery band, as Fancy vows !
 With many a tint did glow.

And I walked, in my dream, by a walnut tree,
Till my soul waxed vain, in her ecstacy—
And exclaimed to the moon and the beauteous lake—
Then a mirror of gold, for that same moon's sake—
 That to gaze on the glorious whole,
 As it shimmer'd in depth and shoal,
From the leaflet green to the mountain gray—
From the glow-worm's glimpse to the gush of day—
Must keep the spirit as holy as they ;
 And howso' the seasons roll,
That Scripture of beauty shed never the ray
 Might pass from the gazer's soul !

And I gazed on the scene, till it holier grew,
As I swept, in my vision, its windings through ;
For a female form, in the young night air,
By that snow-white cot, knelt down in pray'r,
 And methought each feature seemed,
 In the moon-beams while it gleamed,
As though it were tipped by the finger of death,
But it brightened and glowed with her every breath,
Till her love-lit eyes, from the tear-starred heath,
 O'er the broad, blue heavens streamed,
And a tower of light on the lake beneath,
 She appeared in the dream I dreamed !

And I saw till she sat on a green grass seat,
And a slender child knelt at her feet ;

And her own, and the hope of her heart seemed he,
And his small white hands he clasped on her knee,
 While a wave of his restless hair
 Heaved over her fingers fair,
As she pressed the brow—as she led the eye,
Of that kneeling, tearful, dark-eyed boy,
From the moon-lit lake to the far, blue sky,
 While her heart 'rose big with pray'r,
And she talked of her soul's fair home on high,
 And its yearnings to be there.

And she talked of the narrow and tearful way,
That leads to the land of the rainbow ray ;
And she talked of the broad and beauteous path,
That's away by the wells of "Eternal wrath ;"
 And how every tear that flows,
 To a lamp of glory grows,
At the end of the narrow and troubrous way ;
But for every smile that might dare to play
O'er the sparkling path that leads astray,
 An eternal frown-bolt glows,
To crush the soul, and to smite the clay,
 That haughtily 'neath it goes !

'Twas a world-old tale, and I said so, too,
As the child to her closer embraces drew,
And smiled, while he talked of a thousand things
That spirits believe, e'er the time-touch stings ;
 And he looked upon the sky,
 With a glad thought in his eye,
And marvelled, he said, how any could stand
And look on the wonders of water and land,
Or the beautiful moon and her baby-band—
 Those sweet little stars on high—
With a sin, or its seed, in the heart or the hand ;
 He marvelled—ah, not so I !

But my flesh grew cold before mind so pure—
While his soul laughed loud, in her hopes secure ;

And the mother prayed—and I groaned, “Thou’rt blest,
Who hath fondled and fed on so holy a breast!”

And I felt, had the world been mine—

Yea, all yon’ flowers that shine

O'er the far blue fields of infinity—

I'd have given them all for one moment to see,
In my soul—in myself—such another as he—

Alas! or the faintest sign—

As I sighed, in my vision—of aught, in me,
So stamped with the seal divine!

But, methought, in my dream, that my whispered sigh
Awakened the sense of my dreaming eye,
And the present arose, like a shadowy cloud,
Till each glory was veiled in a filmy shroud;

And a voice spake, soft and low,

As a meadow rill through snow:

Alas! that the light in a life begun

Should but hallow a vision e'er life's half run—

That the moral ray of our noon-tide sun

Should fall o'er our memory, so

That we start at the beauty our souls had on

But a few short years ago!



AN EVENING SONG.

Oh! little know they, where the smoke-cloud lies,
On beauty that's withered—on vigour that's dead,
The glories that grow where the song-bird flies,
O'er the green—o'er the blue—under foot—overhead;
Tell them that Heaven with those hath begun,
Who snatched from the whirlwind of gain and its slaves,
Whisper a hymn where the West-falling sun,
Like the eye of Omnipotence, burns on the waves.
Gloria, sit Tibi—oh! Spirit of Love!
Fair are Thy temples, around and above!

Hidden, the cloud-shepherd urgeth his flocks,
Golden and white, o'er their pastures of blue ;
Softly the ocean-pinks blush on the rocks,
Wrapped in their iris-like mantles of dew ;
Slowly the stars from their prisons appear ;
Curtained in crimson's their keeper the sun ;
What, though the North looketh dreamy and drear !
In the South there's a silver will brighten anon !
Gloria, sit Tibi—sweet Spirit of Peace !
Reign o'er us, reign o'er us—never to cease !

Pearl of the heavens !—come, heavenly pearl,
Robed but in modesty—majesty's best !
White as the cheek of some desolate girl,
Startled and stung by a libertine jest.
Beautiful queen of the tenderly fair,
Silvered, like hope, to be shadowed as soon !
Deep in my soul might be murmur'd this prayer :
Pardon him, Heaven, who worships the moon !
Te amo—te amo, or, Brightness or Shade !—
Worship the Maker in all He hath made !

Spirit of Beauty, of Love, and of Peace !
Here are you—there are you—turn where I may,
Save where this *Waster*, unwilling to cease,
Tells of a temple that's melting away :
Ah ! though the future seemed never so fair,
Bitter's the thought that those beauties we know—
Things we have worshipped in comfort—in care—
May be not of those we shall greet where we go.
Te laudo, laudamus—Great Spirit of God !
Broad as the heavens Thy mercy be broad !

A LAY OF AUTUMN.

FAR away, down in the depths of the sky,
Sadly the moon, in her infancy, waded,
Fair as some thought that the minstrel would try
To wring from the clouds that his spirit had shaded ;

Far away down, through the beeches, beneath,
Red rushed the hill-born—the deep river—sighing ;
Up, and away, o'er the wind-worried heath,
Crumpled and crisped were the tawny leaves flying :
Shrivelled and low, with a blight in their breath,
'Round lay the flowerets, all darksome and dying.

" Reared was your globe as an altar to gloom ! "
Groaningly whispered my soul in her sadness ;
" Living in death," said I, " talk we of doom ? "
Leaping from earth, like the echo of madness—
" Here, where the light of the mightiest mind
But the thick darkness around it revealeth—
There, where yon flower—a type of our kind—
Fresh from its beauty, to loathsomeness stealeth—
Wild wails the river, and, yonder, the wind,
Chanting the stave of a hurricane, reeleth !

" Oh ! to wend, withering, evenings and morns,
O'er a life-desert so rugged, so lonely,
Furrowed in darkness, and planted with thorns,
Rending us—bleeding us—rending us only !
Watching the comings of tortures and fears—
Watching the hopes we had welcomed so loudly—
Borne to the tomb by the light of our tears,
Laid in the dust they had gilded so proudly ;—
Oh, to be watching the waning of years,
Our hopes in the dust they had gilded so proudly ! "

Speaker of foolishness !—each is thy friend :
Sorrow is light, where the soul walketh single ;
Light, showing darkness, fulfilleth its end ;
Wisely and well do such opposites mingle—
Wisely thy way hath been planted with thorns—
Fair is the lesson each blossom discloses—
Hallow it—follow it, evenings and morns :
Honey the sweetest on prickles reposes !
Oh ! had not Time been a planter of thorns,
When would'st thou gather Eternity's roses ?

THE BROTHER'S GRAVE.

My brother, dear !—my brother, dear !
I cannot see thee now :
Corruption's clammy gates they've locked
Upon thy beauteous brow.
And now the soul, damp earth they carve,
To crush thee from the light ;
'Tis not thy mother makes thy bed,
My brother, dear, to-night !
'Tis not thy sister pillows now
That forehead streamed with gold ;
Ah ! no—ah ! no—they lay thee low—
Thy bed's the slimy mould,
Thy bed's the slimy mould !
The grave—the grave—and must it grasp
The all we loved to see—
The smile—the kiss—the close heart-clasp—
Thy love—thy truth—
Thy ripe red youth ?
Oh, God, look down on me !

Oh, I had dreams—the dreams had I,
Dear brother, once of thee,
And snow-haired love, when all, mayhap,
Were gone but thee and me :
I looked from life's gray mountain top,
Away o'er youth again,
And felt, the hand that led me there
Would not desert me then ;
I toiled and tottered tow'rds the tomb,
Whilst thou, in chastened gray,
The full, round moon of many years,
Streamed o'er my trackless way :
My dreamy—downward way !
Ah, foolish, foolish, faithless dreams—
Heart-withering dreams to me !
O'er fairer fields to strew thy beams,

So young—so soon—
 My sun—my moon—
 Thy God hath chosen thee !

Who looketh there, and sayeth “ Hush ! ”
 True—’tis the will of God :
 But sisters’ hearts are human flesh,
 And mine ?—’tis not a clod !
 There lie the lips that taught my own
 Their first-born prayers to speak ;
 There lie the hands first lifted mine,
 The Maker’s light to seek.
 Ah, brother, dear !—ah, brother, dear !—
 That holy hand of thine—
 That soul which, like a sacred song,
 Kept melting into mine—
 Kept melting into mine !
 The lips—the hand—the soul—the song—
 My brother ! where art thou ?
 My proud—my pure—my young—my strong !
 Thy cold hand’s there,
 Thy pure soul’s where,
 Would God that mine were now !

Nay—tell me not I’ve brothers yet,
 And sisters, two or three :
 One ringlet of his dark gold hair
 Were worth the world to me !
 My mother’s love—’tis *mother’s* love,
 In sinew, soul and bone ;
 My brother’s love—ah, me !—’twas love,
 And pure, like Heaven’s own !
 Hush, mother !—sisters !—blame me not,
 If anguish bids me rave ;
 Or, if I feel my reason reel—
 My heart within his grave—
 My heart within his grave !

Or, seeking through my fevered lips,
A burning passage there.
Ah ! suffer me this mind-eclipse :
I love you, too,
I do, I do,
If love live in despair.

Oh ! cease, ye men of leaden eyes—
Cease—cease that iron tune :
I cannot hear your shovels ring
Across his breast so soon,
Ah, men !—ah, men ! there's not a clod
Upon him rings or rolls,
But sends a thousand shivering darts
Out through my soul of souls !
Calm ? yes ! oh, yes—I will be calm !
Here, sisters !—mother !—here—
Make ye my brother's bed to-night ?
Ah, mother—mother, dear !
Ah, mother—mother, dear !
Moist ye my brother's lips to-night ?
Ye'll moist them nevermore :
The earth-worm !—hist !—their rosy light—
My heart—my head—
My brother's bed !
Quick—quick !—'tis o'er—'tis o'er !

THE MOTHER'S VIOLET.

'Twas in the moon of quickening showers
I walked among my treasured flowers,
And saw, upon its lowly bed,
One tender sweet, with drooping head—
A little patch of coloured light—
Of gold, and blue, and pearly white—
A look of joy, in sorrow set—
Ah, how I loved that Violet !

That little flower, so fair, so young—
That soul of love without a tongue—
How I had blessed, with whitening lips,
The dew-drop trembling on its tips !
For o'er each spark of saintly white
Still gleamed, methought, no earthly light ;
And yet my hope of hopes was set
Upon that fragile Violet !

I towards it led the warming sun,
And prayed that warmth might ne'er be done :
But, ah ! what sun hath not its shade ?
What bloom so bright it may not fade ?
The morn' may break our fondest dream ;
The snow-flake ride the richest beam ;
And I, when little more than met,
Have lost this sweetest Violet !

Dear, tender, timid, drooping thing,
That might'st have starr'd a seraph's wing—
So grandly pure—so saintly meek—
The Maker's crest upon thy cheek—
A gush of glory, caught from clay,
Thou shon'st before me night and day !
Thou shon'st ! ah, me ! Thou shonest yet,
My timid, trembling Violet !

Ah, me ! ah, me ! that little flower !
I may not tell the holy power
That held my soul in conscious awe,
Since first its cherub face I saw :
Asleep—awake—'twas there in view,
With breast so white, and eye so blue—
So blue—so bright—so often wet—
Ah, Lord ! I loved that Violet !

They tell me that the sun and show'rs
May bring as sweet, or sweeter flow'rs ;
I cannot speak of what may be,
My thoughts are formed from what I see ;

But bud shall never bloom, I ween,
 To rob my soul of what hath been;
 Nor earthly beauty e'er be met,
 To fill thy place, my Violet !

But there's a land where flowers grow,
 Nor scorched by sun, nor paled by snow—
 Where blight may bask in glory's rays ;
 And there is that within me says :
 It may be right—it may be wrong—
I shall be *there* before 'tis long ;
 And that the flow'ret, lost, shall yet
 Become my Heavenly Violet !

Oh ! Thou, whose loves we mayn't rehearse—
 Great Gard'ner of the Universe !
 Who sow'st the cloudy fields of night,
 With flowery orbs of life and light ;
 Whose smile is health ; whose frown, decay ;
 Who giv'st us flowers, and tak'st away—
 Shall insects teach thee *when* to smile ?
 Lord, Thou art just, and we are vile !

Oh, Thou, my God—Eternal Power
 Of Heaven, of earth—of man and flower !
 Who roll'st the worlds upon thy palm—
 Thou knowest all I was, and am ;
 And wilt me pardon—yea, Thou wilt !—
 Thy mercy shall remove my guilt :
 And I shall clasp, before Thee yet,
Thine angel-flower—*my* Violet !



THE CONFESSION.

So, MARY—light of Nelly's eye !
 You've stol'n a race, this morning, o'er :
 I hope the meadow-path was dry,
 And that they've bridged yon awful shore—

So deep—so wide,
By Pea-field side,
I'm sure I thought you'd come no more !
But there you stand,
Sweet friend of mine—
The voice—the hand—
Could be but thine ;
I knew your foot upon the floor—
I knew it at the outer door !

They think that I am like to die !
It may be so ; what need I care ?
May God keep dry my mother's eye !
And, Mary—you—sit closer ; there !
Now, see there's none
But you alone—
There 's something, here, I'd like to share—
A girlish wail,
For your own ear—
A little tale,
My Mary, dear !
A little nearer, with your chair—
But hush !—yon step upon the stair ?

'Tis silent now. Ah, mercy, me !
What I should say, I hardly know :
Is Willie well ? They say that *she*
But little tries to keep him so !
Ah, could I find
That she were kind,
And he were well, I'd like to go ;
But, Mary dear,
If, after all,
I'm but to hear,
His cup is gall—
And you, his sister ! Willie—oh !
What wonder that my heart's so low ?

How oft, beneath the yellow moon,
When hearts were light, and work was by,
We turned December into June,
With race, and jest, and melody !

Ah, there was one
Who would have gone
Through floods of fire, without a sigh,
For that sweet press
One hand did get—
That long caress,
When fingers met
In song or dance so lovingly—
For one sweet glance from Willie's eye !

He did not know it !—No, sweet friend,
She never told the face of clay !
But oft at Leezie's gable end,
When merry feet drove out the day,
And beauteous Jane
Sat down again,
With Willie by her side—so gay !
Dear keep my mind—
That burning cheek !
Was Willie blind—
Did that not speak ?
How often has she stolen away,
For fear of what that cheek might say !

Yea—stolen away, and buried, deep
In roses, at the garden foot,
She watched the little birds asleep—
The shimmering dew upon the fruit—
The white moon swim
To heaven's brim—
The yellow stars above her shoot—
Ay, till she heard,
On trembling wing,
The morning bird
Get up and sing,

When she, too, trembling, pale and mute,
Slipp'd in and changed her dripping suit !

Her mother tried to share her grief,
But, no ! she wept and would'nt tell ;
Yet, Mary, it is my belief
That few e'er mother loved so well ;
But that weak brain,
God help the twain !
So—dawns and twilights rose and fell,
Till merry June,
And whispers free,
Said, something, soon,
Was like to be ;
And wake and dance, and dale and dell,
Knew all of Jane and Willie Bell !

For me—I mean that silly one,
Who loved so secret—loved so true—
She knew her golden lint was spun—
She saw it reeled, and numbered too !
All hope—all joy,
She knew were by—
Sweet Peace ! she knew not *what* she knew !
She only pray'd,
From week to week,
The Sexton's spade
Might hide her cheek,
Before the worm that gnawed her through,
Drew private scorn, from public view.

Ah, well—ah, well ! across the floor
A shadow with one evening came ;
She 'rose to meet it at the door—
She knew the foot that brought the same !
When pale as death,
With fluttering breath,
Poor Willie gave the day a name,

When—"Jane and I—
 You know the rest!"
 He sighed—"you'll try
 To be our guest—
 Or well—or ill!—I'll bear the blame!"
 What's this?—his hand was like a flame!

He slank away. Dear Lord of love!
 A something flashed upon my mind—
 Ay, MINE! For see—ah, Heaven above!
 'Twas I!—and he? We both were blind!
 He loved me, too—
 I saw—I knew—
 But ne'er had breathed it on the wind!
 And now—this past—
 This unrevealed!
 When lots are cast,
 And dooms are sealed?
 'Twould make me worst of womankind,
 To shew what both had failed to find!

And merry bells rang in the church!
 What need I more to *you* unfold?
 You know who swooned within the porch,
 And whose the tears that o'er her roll'd?
 Ah, well!—Again,
 One swoon—and—then!—
 But, Mary, darling!—'t must be told!—
 I'd like, I own,
 Were you to say,
 In careless tone,
 Some busy day:
 We laid her, Willie, in the mould,
 Who loved you, till her heart was cold!

Now!—move me near yon dancing light,
 That streaks the blind with yellow stain;
 It grows so dark! Can this be night,
 That's dropping down so soon again?

And, through the dark,
A blood-red spark—
No bigger than the spring-dew rain—
Keeps flickering by,
 And here below
My breast—ah, why ?—
 There !—let it go !—
My mother !—Willie ! Ah, this pain !—
Sweet Heaven !—thy call's through every vein !



D E L U S I O N .

I saw, last night, the straw-roofed cot,
Where oft she turn'd her wheel ;
I saw the gable where we sat,
 And felt what young hearts feel ;
And I had thrown my years away,
 And felt once more a child,
While she, who was my night and day,
 Hung o'er me there and smiled.

I looked, and, lo ! at length she sat,
 In holy childhood, too,
And though a woman ere we met,
 I felt that likeness true ;
But while, 'mid all that lamb-like youth,
 Wherein her beauty slept,
She sang a song of "Changeless Truth"—
 I only watched and wept !

I took her offered hand in mine,
 And looked far down her eyes :
Ah, me ! within their saint-like shine,
 What fearful mysteries !
Again gushed forth her song of "Truth ;"
 But, 'neath its wild'ring stream,
I leaped from out my blinding youth,
 And all was but a dream !

FIRE.

How I hate your human ices,
Wheresoe'er they cock a crest,
For there heaves a fire-worshipper
Beneath my woman's vest :
And, asleep—awake—for ever,
To my soul the fancy clings,
That there's fire—living fire—
Within all fair things !

From an emmet to an Altai,
From a dew-drop to a wave ;
From the linnet's mellow warble,
To an Etna's crashing stave ;
From the fly that smites my window,
To the song my poet sings,
Oh, there's fire !—living fire—
Within all fair things !

And, within my heart there's fire,
When I look upon his eyes—
Living wells of sun and shadow,
Where my earthly heaven lies !—
And he whispers, through his dreamings,
As his spirit star-ward springs :
Yea, there's fire—love, there's fire
Within all fair things !

From the cowslip to the cluster,
Where the yellow meteor shoots ;
From the peach tree's purple glory
To the worm beneath its roots ;
From our "ingle" to the æther,
Where the petrel's vesper rings,
Oh, there's fire !—holy fire—
Within all fair things !

From the radiant rainbow o'er us,
To that arch beneath our feet,
Where the tear-like di'mond trembles
In the eye of Central Heat ;
From the lowest to the highest,
Where the seraph burns and sings,
Oh, there 's fire !—blessed fire—
Within all fair things !

Ah, my poet !—and those dreamings !—
When the altar-kindled coal
Steeps thy brow in twilight lustre,
And thy whitened cheek in soul,
Let me, knelt beside my darling,
In those deep imaginings,
Bless the fire—living fire—
That's in all fair things !

—————

C O N S T A N C Y.

Sit by thee, love !—didst thou think I'd leave thee ?
What, though thy pale cheeks wringly grieve me !
Hope lights the star of thy young, dark eye, love,
Beauty and strength shall come by-and-bye, love !
Sit by thee ! ah ! hang in frenzy o'er thee,
Begging our Maker's leave to adore thee ;
Kissing that brow, till over its snow, love,
Gleams of my own warm heart-light glow, love !

True is my soul, as when first I found thee !
Hair, like a night-cloud, swimming around thee—
Over those white hills streamed with blue, love,
Which, as my heart heaved, still heaved too, love ;
Oh ! and so pure, ere my cheek profaned them,
Virtue, thy holiest touch had stained them ;
Bless them, may He, who the pure still blesses !
God grant a crown to these long, dark tresses !

Oh ! to sit thus, in your dark eyes' shine, love,
 Mantling my soul in the light of thine, love ;
 Watching your eye, send the heart-born story
 Into my own like a stream of glory !

Oh ! to sit thus, till our paled locks flow, like
 Lights, leading tomb-ward thoughts, grown as snow-like !
 Then with the white o'er our souls, and brows, love,
 Join the redeemed, a saint and his spouse, love !

Pray with me—pray till our pure parts wander
 The cloud-paved paths of the blue fields yonder,
 Heaven may twine, as it ever hath done, love,
 Pleasure or pain of the twain in one, love !

Where, through the night of each dark death-woe, love,
 Watcheth by one hearth sun-light and snow, love,
 Heaven hath promised a moon-lit way, love
 Opened by one word—"Pray!" love—"pray," love !

MY FRIEND.

I SING my friend—my faithful friend !
 May Heaven his every right defend !
 His love is like the time of flowers ;
 His honour, Winter's whitest showers ;
 His mind is like a garden blown—
 With every sweet to knowledge known—
 Or arch that spans your mental night,
 And pierces every speck with light !
 His heart is like a di'mond mine,
 Where light and warmth and firmness blend :
 Oh ! ne'er a nobler throbbed than thine—
 So truly man's—so near divine—
 My own—my tried—my faithful friend !

'Tis true, his features mayn't possess,
 The yielding muscle, apt to dress,
 In heartless, flickering light or shade,
 With time and place to toy and trade ;

For, true to Nature's holier laws,
No muscle moves without a cause !
His soul, though at his finger-tips,
Must smile herself, before his lips :
He can't be taught to doff or don,
 Unfelt, the trifling moment's mood ;
And true as all that's true in man,
Howe'er the world might bless or ban,
 He'd nobly scorn it though he could !

But meet you, once, his eye unmasked,
His soul will rush to yours unasked !
And greet your all he finds sincere,
With smile for smile, or tear for tear ;
And though his tongue may lack the powers
To bring you sweets, from prickly flowers—
And though it e'en be scant of words,
To ease his heart of half its hoards
Of feeling, steeped in spirit-tears,
 He'll bring you that, in every tone,
Which never kindred spirit hears,
Unblest with that which soothes and cheers—
 But must be heard, or can't be known !

He'll measure not your heart or brain
By light or shade, but by the twain ;
And then, as speaks his verdict found,
He'll mark your soul her proper ground.
And though he lack the pliant grace
That wins its way to wealth and place,
Within his heart of hearts there lies,
For all that's great, whate'er its guise,
That reverence, pure, sincere, profound,
 Which through the eye and act may blaze,
But howso'—whenso' it abound,
Would loathe to live in boisterous sound,
 That pains the worth it seeks to praise !

My faults he'll face with iron tone,
But, gone, my cause he makes his own ;

For ever yearns his soul to see
 His friend seem all a friend should be !
 Ah ! ye who'd bear a brother's part,
 With friendship's lips and foeman's heart,
 Emitting gall, in mimic woe,
 "That such and such were so and so!"
 Come kindly forth with weapon bared!
 For, oh ! the bolt that blights the oak,
 Or hand that fires the couch it shared,
 Were nought—were noble—when compared
 With seeming Friendship's treble stroke !

Then on my head, my truthful friend,
 May all that's bright and blest descend !
 Thou holy circlet round my name
 In every sun and shade the same :
 Whose love, so free from self or guile,
 Hath lit its torch at no man's smile ;
 But prized me, for myself, alone,
 And every hour hath fonder grown !
 Oh ! close my day, howe'er it may,
 Or weal or woe my steps attend,
 My heart to thine, and this my lay :
 My health, my wealth, may melt away,
 I've worlds of both in such a friend !



H O P E.

WHEN this planet rolled in joy,
 Fresh and warm, and green and golden,
 Confidence, a burly boy,
 Wedded Doubt, a lady olden ;
 He, though stern and danger-wise,
 Romped too oft with young *Miss-Carry* :
 Doubt was cautious, e'en her eyes
 Shewed so falsely!—very, very !

Oh, their life!—how evil starred!—
Less of hot than boiling water;
“But,” one morning saith her lord,
“Dearest Doubt, behold our daughter:
‘Hope’ is the name the angels leave her,
Bless thy God-sent vision-weaver!

“Born of thee, as well, I wist”—
“Go,” she groaned, “thy ravings grieve me!”
But when Doubt the infant kissed,
“Why,” she sighed, “I’ll try to b’lieve thee!”
Oh, that jarring, warring twain!
Oh, the world their teachings made us!
All too dark, or all too plain—
This had shielded, that betrayed us!
Heaven itself, they ope’d—they shut—
Clouded, narrowed, cleared, or spread it;
“Boast it but one starry foot,
Who can tell but I may tread it?”
So said Hope, a cherub seeming—
Haply, fonder, though, of dreaming!

Hope became a damsel fair,
Mailed her soul with mild endurance—
Half her mother’s doubting air—
Half her father’s stern assurance;
But she, grieved to see the world
Groan beneath her parents’ teaching,
Down to death herself had hurled,
Had not Faith appeared, beseeching:
“Virgin Queen of day-light dreams,
Live, and Nature’s heart shall love thee,
While one yellow star there gleams
Through that dusky blue above thee—
Teach the soul, in sorrow shrouded,
Night’s but day a little clouded!”

Now, between the seeing blind,
And the rashly sure in thinking,
Hope, the holy, tries to bind
Riven hearts, in anguish sinking.

Where the tempest walks abroad—
 Where the oak, in brawny glory,
 Quivers 'neath the breath of God,
 And the mountain, hard and hoary,
 From that arch of storm and cloud,
 Where its brow so long had wintered,
 Bursts in bellow, long and loud,
 As its iron crown is splintered—
 There she whispers, weeping Wonder :
 “ Mercy moves before the thunder ! ”

LINES ON THE BLANK LEAVES OF A BOOK,

INSCRIBED TO MASTERS ROBERT PATTERSON ELLIOTT AND JOHN M'DOWELL
 ELLIOTT, OF THE OLD LODGE, BELFAST,

As a small but sincere token of the writer's gratitude to their worthy Parent.

TAKE this book, my boys—earnestly peruse it ;
 Much of after lies in the way ye use it :
 Keep it neat and clean, for remember in it
 Every stain that 's seen marks a thoughtless minute.

Life is like a book—Time, a dingy writer ;
 Make his hook and crook straighter grow and brighter.
 Write he will, and on—till each page allotted—
 Bobby, thee and John, printed be or blotted.

Youth 's a sunny beam, dancing o'er a river,
 With a flashing gleam—then away for ever :
 Use it while ye may—not in childish mourning—
 Not in childish play—but in useful learning.

As your thoughts grow sage, make their music mellow ;
 Nurse, through every stage, kindness for your fellow :
 This lives not in forms, as too many teach us—
 Not in open arms, not in silken speeches :
 Not in haughty eye, not in artful dealing—
 Not within the sigh of a mimicked feeling—
 But its lights preside, rich in Nature's splendour,
 Over honest pride—gentleness and candour.

From your hearts condemn vain gesticulation ;
Oft we see a gem dimmed by affectation :
Fashion's forms may do where there 's *ice* below them—
But where hearts are true, simple truths can show them.

Slight ye not the soul for the frame's demerit—
Oft a shattered bowl holds a mighty spirit ;
Never search a breast by the ruby's glances—
Pomp 's a puppet guest, danced by circumstances.

What is good and great sense can soon determine ;
Prize it, though ye meet or in rags or ermine :
Fortune 's truly blind—fools may be her captors ;
But the wealth of MIND sceptres *all* our sceptres.

Value not the lips swiftest kept in motion ;
Fleetly-sailing ships draw no depth of ocean :
Snatch the chary gleam from the cautious knowing ;
For the deepest stream scarcely lisps 'tis flowing.

Flashing wit revere as a summer flower
That a fool may wear for a passing hour ;
Write its painted rays—knavery's hackneyed hobby ;
Wisdom's purer blaze *burns* while shining, Bobby.

Cull from bad and good every seeming flower,
Store it up as food for some hungry hour ;
Press its every leaf, and remember, Johnny,
Even weeds, the chief, may have drops of honey.

Touch nor taste with crime, ne'er so lightly painted ;
For that writer, Time, ever tells the tainted—
Justice never nods ; boys, you'll find that rather
Crimes and pickled rods bud and bloom together.

Pomp and power alone never make a blessing ;
Seek not e'en a throne by one wretch distressing.
Better slave to be, for the blood-earned penny,
Than be rich, and see tears on every guinea.

Think, my gentle boys, every man a brother !
That's where honour lies—nay, but greatness rather ;

One's the wondrous whole—lordly flesh won't know it ;
But the kingly soul sees but *vice* below it.

Bobby, thoughts like these store you more than money ;
Read them less to please than to practice, Johnny :
Artless though their dress, as an infant's dimple,
Truth is none the less for being truly simple.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT.

THEY tell me that I should not weep
When Heaven calls its own ;
Ah, think they that a mother's heart
Is but a living stone ?
They tell me that my constant tears
Will waste the mother's cheek ;
Ah, know they not were these to cease,
The mother's heart would break ?
When o'er my soul there hangs a cloud,
With no redeeming ray,
Will Heaven blame me if I try
To weep that cloud away ?
Sweet Saviour, dear, look down, and tear
Her shadow from my view ;
Or take—oh, take, for mercy's sake,
The mother to Thee, too !

Here many a holy hour I've sat,
When none but God did see ;
And on this heaving heart, my bird,
My beauty, pillow'd thee !
And wept in pride of soul, and looked
O'er thee and future years ;
And kissed each dimple till it shone
A little well of tears :
Or soothed, and made thy wordless mirth
In infant chuckling rise,
Till all my joyful spirit reeled
In frenzy through my eyes.

My babe, my dove ! oh, Father above,
What now of coming years ?
She's thine, she's thine ! but what are mine ?
Her green grave, and these tears !

I see the blackness of my soul,
Where all looked bright before :
My homely hearth the willow seat,
The waves before my door ;
I see my babes steal round my knee,
Half weeping, half in shame ;
And hang their heads, and whisper low,
When breathing sister's name :
And then my wandering fancy wings
Some shadow by my door :
I start, I shriek—oh no ! oh no !
My Lizzie comes no more.
Oh no ! oh no ! my lamb of snow,
There's glory round your brow ;
And broad and bright with holy light,
Are all your play-grounds now !

I look upon the flowery mounds
Her snowy hands did make ;
I kneel, and bless the dying flowers,
And kiss them for her sake ;
And oft as droops the fuschia bell
Beneath my scalding tear,
The panthom-echo of her voice,
Mounts, laughing on my ear !
Then can you blame a mother's hands,
For twining through her hair,
When all within that mother's heart
Is boiling in despair ?
That eye, that cheek—speak, Mercy ! speak !—
She's not a putrid clod !—
My child, my child, thy mother's wild :
Forgive me, oh, my God !

HAVE YE SEEN.

HAVE ye seen the thunder cloud
When its sable breast is riven,
And its dying groan, so loud,
Shakes the azure roof of heaven ;
While its spirit, fleet and proud,
Is on flaming pinions driven,
Where a cold and earthly shroud
To the mighty thing is given ?
Through that cloud and through its groan,
And its soul of fire flying,
To our hearts of icy stone
Is the God of Nature sighing !

Have you seen the silent stream
Through its grassy curtains peeping,
Like a molten summer beam,
O'er the polished pebbles creeping ?
Have you seen the snowy steam
Where the mountain torrents leaping,
Like the spirit of a dream,
Over every barrier sweeping ;
Through that stream, as through the swell,
Of that whirling torrent's shrieking,
To our bosoms, full as well,
Is the God of Nature speaking !

Ye've been in the forest shade
When its wordless bards were singing,
And you've seen the ivy braid
To the landscape-lordlings clinging ;
And ye've marked the grassy blade
From its dewy-green sheath springing,
Over which the insect played
With the beads his art was stringing :
Through the whole, in speaking flame,
(Though the many may not heed them,)
Burst the Maker's will and name—
Look again, and learn to read them !

THE COTTAGE ON THE HEATH.

THE evening sun was melting
 Into silvery red and blue ;
And the hazel heath was covered
 With a glistening sheet of dew :
And the sward was rich and flowery
 Where a mourning man was laid ;
And the cot was low and lonely
 Where a little maiden played.
But her joyous infant spirit
 Leaped in music o'er her tongue,
While a diadem of daisies
 O'er the mourner's brow she flung ;
And he strove to smile upon her,
 While a stream of broken sighs
'Rose and bathed the budding beauty
 That was laughing in his eyes.
 But she chaunted,
 As she flaunted
With the flowers wild and fair,
 Saying, " Father,
 Weeping father,
 Sure I've these for mother's hair ! "

But the mourner only answered,
 " Flowers !—flowers to her now ! "
And he passed his frantic fingers
 O'er his monomaniac brow.
" But name—ah, name my Sarah
 No more, no more to me ;
For my love for her was holy
 As thy Maker's is for thee :
And, oh, mercy ! to behold her
 In her beauty's death eclipse,
When the passing spirit quivered
 On her pale and icy lips ;

And that cloud of curling tresses
Heaving o'er her snowy chest,
Like an infant pillow dancing,
With a sunbeam on its breast.

Oh, my Sarah,
Oh, my Sarah,
What a void's this heart of mine ;
Would to Heaven,
Would to Heaven,
It were still and cold as thine !

“ I loved thee, not, my Sarah,
For that wave of curling brown,
That streamed across a forehead
Never darkened by a frown ;
Nor that cheek of purest paleness,
Nor that eye of midnight stain,
Nor the look of love it gave me,
But can never give again ;
Nor that fairy foot as soundless
When it traced the joyous ring,
As the feathery flake that falleth
From the Winter angel's wing :
But I loved, I loved thee, Sarah,
For an inner, better part—
For a spirit-stealing meekness,
Breathed a halo from thy heart ;
And it bringeth,
And it flingeth,
Even yet its solemn shine,
With a healing
Ray of feeling
O'er this broken heart of mine.

“ But sing thee on, my cherub !
For I may not stay thy song,
And thy mother's witching music,
Living on thine infant tongue :

'Twill cheer my evening hours
When this heart is lorn and lone,
And we gaze upon that heaven
Where thy sainted mother's gone.
And fairer, love ! and brighter
Is the palace-hall she treads,
Than yon silvery sea of glory
Hanging o'er our stricken heads.
And we'll meet her—oh, we'll meet her
Far beyond its golden foam ;
And we'll sing our songs together
In thine angel mother's home.
Oh, my Sarah,
Oh, my Sarah,
Burning, burning is my brow ;
Would to Heaven,
Would to Heaven,
We were with thee even now!"

And another sun has risen
O'er the cottage on the heath,
But the mourner's heart is shackled,
In the frozen chain of death ;
For the living links were broken
That had bound his soul to earth,
And it burst its shattered temple,
With a shout of maniac mirth :
Yet his cherub slumbers sweetly
On that arm of frozen clay,
For she only saw him laughing,
As his spirit rushed away.
And when, no longer smiling,
In her infant joy she crept,
With the links of dewy daisies.
To fling o'er him while he slept !
But he slumbers—
Ay, he slumbers

Where there is no burning brow :
And his Ellen,
Infant Ellen,
Is an orphan wanderer now !

THE LAST WISH.

Oh, gather me the flowers fair,
And strew them o'er my bed ;
They'll soothe me, mother, while I stay,
They'll deck me when I'm dead :
But throw the white rose far away,
For Willie's brow was fair ;
Nor bring the leaf of golden tint,
To tell of Willie's hair.

I drew the curls across his brow,
My heart beat quick and sore ;
I gazed upon that frozen smile,
Till I could gaze no more ;
And when I knelt beside his grave,
Fain, fain were tears to flow ;
But something whispered to my heart,
You'll soon be full as low.

Oh, there's a spot at Devis foot,
Where longer lies the dew ;
And there are daisies purer white,
And violets deeper blue !
Look on them kindly as you pass,
But touch no flower there ;
For Willie said they bloomed for him
To 'twine in Annie's hair.

Ah, draw the curtains closer round,
And hide from me the skies ;
I cannot bear that sunny blue,
So like my Willie's eyes :

And raise ye up this swimming head,
 My last dear wish to crave :
 Now mother, mother, mind ye this—
 Lay me in Willie's grave.

WEAVER'S SONG.

- On merrily speeds the shuttle, boys,
 And gaily smacks the lay ;*
 Then, cheerily, as the hour flies,
 Let's sing its weight away :
 No gems we need to deck the brow,
 Nor beads of kingly oil,
 For richer far adorn us now—
 The sweat of honest toil :
 But, while ye weave, and time the stave,
 See all goes fair and well ;
 For what's amiss, depend on this,
 The warehouse day will tell.

'Tis sweet to see the shuttles play,
 And hear the *flighters* speak,
 On little silvery Saturday,
 When well we've spent the week :
 Aye, that's the day can tell who slept
 With sunlight on his eyes ;
 But we have leaped, ere day has swept
 The ravellings from the skies :
 Then, as ye weave, and time the stave,
 This maxim keep in sight—
 The little done, with Monday's sun,
 Is much on Friday night.

And life is but a gingham chain,
 Why o'er it should we grieve,
 Though strips and cheques of joy and pain
 We now and then must weave ?

* That part of a weaver's furniture which contains the reed.

'Twill one day end, and this we know—
 The Great Employer's love
 Can every thread that's dark below
 Make rainbow-bright above.

Then with the threads of darkest shades
 Should this life be perplexed ?
 No, onward drive, and nobly strive
 For fairer in the next !

Oh for the day when every cloth
 Shall in the light be tried,
 And justice given alike to both
 Employer and employed !

Oh, for you then, ye drones of trade,
 Who crush the struggling poor,
 For every fraud ye'll well be paid
 With interest full as sure !

But mind the *scobes*, for lady's robes
 Must faultless be as flowers ;
 Nor *crack* nor *cloud* can be allowed
 In dainty work like ours !

And now, when youth and strength are rife,
 Let's so each hour employ,
 That ere the Friday eve of life,
 Our "pushing" may be by :
 And so to wait our warehouse fate,
 Without being much afraid
 Of bringing "bail" to shame or hate
 By any work we've made.

Then, while ye weave, and time the stave,
 See all goes fair and well ;
 For what's amiss, depend on this,
That warehouse day will tell !



N A N N Y.

Oh, for an hour when the day is breaking,
Down by the shore, when the tide is making !
Fair as a white cloud, thou, love, near me,
None but the waves and thyself to hear me :
Oh, to my breast how these arms would press thee !
Wildly my heart in its joy would bless thee ;
Oh, how the soul thou hast won would woo thee,
Girl of the snow-neck ! closer to me.

Oh, for an hour as the day advances,
(Out where the breeze on the broom-bush dances,)
Watching the lark, with the sun-ray o'er us,
Winging the notes of his heaven-taught chorus !
Oh, to be there, and my love before me,
Soft as a moonbeam smiling o'er me !
Thou wouldest but love, and I would woo thee,
Girl of the dark eye ! closer to me.

Oh, for an hour, where the sun first found us,
(Watching the eve throw her red robes round us)—
Brushing the dew from the gale's soft winglets,
Pearly and sweet, with thy long dark ringlets :
Oh, to be there on the sward beside thee,
Telling my tale, though I know you'd chide me ;
Sweet were thy voice though it should undo me—
Girl of the dark locks, closer to me !

Oh, for an hour by night or by day, love,
Just as the heavens and thou might say, love ;
Far from the stare of the cold-eyed many,
Bound in the breath of my dove-souled Nanny !
Oh, for the pure chains that have bound me,
Warm from thy red lips circling round me !
Oh, in my soul, as the light above me,
Queen of the pure hearts, do I love thee.

DREAM OF A WANDERER.

I LOOKED upon the ocean,
 And I looked upon the strand—
I looked upon the heavens
 That o'erhung the stranger's land ;
But the brilliant blue was wanting,
 And the robe of many dyes,
That each sea-sprung vale displayeth
 Where my native mountains rise.
And the waves, like warlike spirits,
 In their darkly-glistening shrouds,
Rose and flung their silvery helmets
 In the pathway of the clouds ;
But the breeze of bracing freshness,
 That my fevered frame did seek,
In an icy odour only,
 Wantoned o'er my wasted cheek.
And I found me, as around me
 Rung the elemental roar,
Heart-stricken and forsaken,
 On a sterile, stranger shore.

But a soothing angel hovered
 By that darkly-writhing main,
And on dreamy pinions bore me
 To my native isle again.
Oh, the sweetness and the brightness
 Of her meadows and her rills,
And the rainbow tinge of beauty
 That was sleeping on her hills,
As the rosy lip of morning,
 In the ripeness of its sheen,
Burst, and rolled a golden current
 O'er the glistening glancing green ;
Where the little shamrock shaded
 Stem and leaf from human sight,
Underneath the hoary crystal
 Of a chastened Autumn night :

While the breezes wooed the daisies,
With a heaven in their tone ;
And the fountains on the mountains
All in ruddied silver shone.

How I leaped upon those mountains !
How I gazed upon that sky !
Till my very spirit revelled
Through a galaxy of joy :
But the beauteous vision's fading
To a scene of darker hue ;
And an ocean strand of strangers
Bursts again upon my view ;
And the mountain billows marshalled
In their merry might advance :
How I trembled as they gambolled
In their fearful foamy dance !
What tears of burning bitterness !
What frenzied words I spoke !
My home—my home—ah, heaven !
And thus weeping, I awoke.
But I found me, as around me
Waved the tawny Autumn's pride,
'Mid the pleasures—yea, the treasures—
Of my native Lagan side !

THE RE-UNITED.

GIRL of my bosom ! thou pale cheeked and lowly,
Come to my pillow now, softly and slowly !
Fain would I hear thee speak kindly above me ;
Girl of the altered cheek ! still do I love thee.

Softly she drew her nigh, pale cheeked and lowly ;
Up rose his dying eye, tearful and slowly ;
Stricken and lone thou art, kneeling beside me ;
Pulse of my boyish heart ! why should I chide thee ?

Mind you the garden-foot ; green be it ever !
 Mind you the willow-root, spanning the river :
 There lay the drifted snows, black night above me,
 When first my bosom rose, sighing, I love thee !

There first those lips of thine, truly and trembling,
 Emptied thy soul in mine—was it dissembling ?
 False be the world, asthore ! black-tongued and hearted ;
 Smile, and I'll weep no more—sighing—“ We parted ! ”

Up rose her gushing eye, dark as the raven ;
 There did her truest lie, still as stone graven :
 Warm o'er his freezing cheek, hands clasped above him,
 Melted her dying shriek—false world, I love him !



THE MANIAC.

STAY a while, yellow moon,
 O'er the green hills you're leaving ;
 I'll be with you soon
 As my mother quits grieving :
 For sorrow in heaps,
 Ah, the blackest, they've brought her,
 Who kisses and weeps
 When she calls me her daughter.
 But hark ! 'tis the wind
 Through the riven roof blowing ;
 Ah, blasts are unkind
 When the dark clouds are snowing !
 Long, long may the wretch eat his scant bite in sorrow,
 Who cut the roof tree o'er you, Mauriad M'Caura !

Sure the winds their white wings
 O'er your green bed have shaken ;
 'Tis your own one that sings—
 Wirra, why don't you waken ?

Nor night, morn, nor noon,
Shall her love ever vary ;
Poor mother ! sweet moon !
Ye're the dear ones to Mary.
Are your locks thin and old ?
Ah ! the agent shan't harm them ;
When your fingers grow cold,
In my bosom I'll warm them.

Ha, ha ! for the feet that the snows couldn't fetter !
See agent ! see man ! is it this that's your debtor ?

Yellow moon, 'twas asleep,
Like an ingrate, you found me ;
Not an eye on the sheep
That are straying around me ;
Pretty clouds, walk away
O'er the blue lake above me ;
Of your fleeces so gray
I will sing till ye love me !
Hush ! the storm comes again,
All my dear ones to scatter ;
How it sings through my brain
As our cabin they shatter !

Come, mother, more dear to our ear is its yelling,
Than the harp and the song in the agent's fair dwelling.

To be sure 'twas the cot
Where was cradled my father ;
Oh, this brow's boiling hot !
Won't you go with me, mother ?
A harp I will make
From the rainbow so mellow ;
And strings I will take
From the sunbeams so yellow :
And then, from yon cloud,
Like a snow-mountain sailing,
We'll look down so proud
On this world and its wailing ;

And oh ! 'tis a world full of sadness and sorrow ;
Then I'll go, pretty moon, ay, we'll all meet to-morrow.

Don't they say that on high
 Every pulse dances lighter ;
 Oh, how dim grew her eye,
 And her white cheek turned whiter.
 Sure they gleaned our last stalk
 Ere they sent us to wander ;
 Oh, worlds for a walk
 Up yonder, up yonder !
 In fountains so deep,
 Whence the day does be springing,
 These ringlets I'll steep
 While the angels are singing ;
 Till each gushing glory shall gild them all over :
 Oh, there are the paths that the snow cannot cover !

How she rocks in her woe,
 And you'd have me to leave her ;
 Oh, 'tis well, well ye know,
 How my wandering would grieve her,
 Not a warm ember's gleam—
 'Neath the bare bush ye laid her ;
 Hush, Mary, ye dream !
 'Tis a grave they have made her ;
 Sure her quivering heart broke
 On the spot you had chosen ;
 Sure the last words she spoke
 To your own lips were frozen.
 Long, long may the wretch eat his scant bite in sorrow,
 Who cut the roof tree o'er you, Mauriad M'Caura !



A REQUEST.

OH, when I am clasped to the bosom of death,
 Will you make me a grave where the ocean's breath
 May around me rise in the whirlwind spring,
 That the billowy wanderers love to sing ?
 For I've rode in their ire some twice or thrice,
 And my soul would feast on that thunder voice !

And when in the earth this body ye fling,
 Wirra ! what know ye but the tempest king
 May shift his throne to a shoreward sea,
 And shriek an anthem of death for me.
 Then, make me a grave by the Whitehouse shore,
 For I love the spot, and its whirlwind roar !

Than a golden cloud on an evening sky,
 More fair is the spot where I'd wish to lie :
 There the angel of Spring is on Winter's path,
 Ere the foam of his lip hath left the heath ;
 While the hoar he had tossed from his brow of gloom,
 Seems only a shower of silver bloom.
 Oh, my heart and my soul's in the wave and the wold
 And their paradise glories of green and of gold ;
 And the life-like sigh of the rainbow rills,
 And that laughing monarch of Ulster's hills,
 Whose riven-rock lips in the smile appears
 They have worn, and may wear, for a thousand years !

Then make me a grave by the Whitehouse shore,
 For the longer I look I love the more—
 Were my nearest and dearest not cradled there ?
 Ah, the first of their food was its ocean air !
 And their love of home's in this inward tide,
 That fires my soul with a Gaelic pride ;
 For theirs was a race whose plumes of yore
 Oft danced in the flash of the good Claymore.
 But oh, for my sires' adopted land !
 I've an Irish heart and an Irish hand ;
 And the heart would dare, if the hand could do,
 What her friends might wish, and her foes might rue !

Let others sigh for a gilded bed,
 With its curtains of marble round their head ;
 If never such curtain or couch for me,
 I would sleep as sound in the wildest sea,
 Where the tempest prince in his mirth might come,
 And over me rear a tower of foam ;

Or rattle around with his steeds of spray—
How my spirit could laugh at their wildest neigh !
And his golden bolts, as they cleave the cloud,
Would gild me o'er in my slimy shroud.
Then make me a grave by the Whitehouse shore,
For the longer I look I love the more !

THE FAIRY SERENADE.

AWAKE thee ! awake thee ! my pretty fairy queen !
See, the sky is blue and the grass is green,
 And the monarch of the east is gone ;
And the blue sky weeps while the red prince sleeps
 On his gorgeous golden throne ;
And the spider spreads out his pearly threads,
 And the young moon tips Slieveban ;
But as faint the while as a mortal's smile,
 Or the glance of a dying fawn,
Oh, the gay green bower, and the twilight hour
 Ere the sky puts its star-bloom on !

And broad are the lawns of your airy fairy king :
And we'll o'er them glide on the watery wing
 Of a love-sick maiden's sigh.
And thy crown I'll plume with the golden bloom
 Of the blue-robed violet's eye ;
And we'll fill our glass from a blade of grass,
 And we'll drink to its emerald dye ;
While we dance those springs the young daisy sings,
 When she's kissed by the twilight fly.
Oh, the gay green bower, and the gray eve hour,
 When the dew-lamps round us lie !

And I'll show thee the mortal's world, my queen,
With its dim, and its dark, and the gulfs between,
 And its wringing wrongs and care ;
Oh, 'tis full of guile as the wanton's smile,
 And as cold as the miser's prayer !
And it seems at most but a desert coast,

Save a few buds wondrous fair,
That the minstrel child rears on the wild,
With that cold-eyed world to share.
Then ours be the bower, and the twilight hour,
And no ice-eyed mortals there !



SALLY OF AUGHNAGEARUCH.

HER home's on Aughnagearuch's breast,
Amid the heather brown,
Who plucked for me the berries blae,
That gemmed its cloudy crown :
She leads the dance in Umberban,
The song in Magherabwee ;
And oh, for one short hour this day,
With her on Slievneenleigh !

I wandered with my desert-flower
O'er many a mossy mound,
But never breathed in Sally's ear
One love-revealing sound ;
And yet her eye, her full dark eye,
Swam in unusual shine,
Whene'er I touched her little hand
Of living snow with mine !

We met again—the eve before
'Twas whispered we should part ;
And there was paleness on her cheek
That wrung my very heart :
But not a sigh, or not a smile
Her trembling lips stole o'er ;
But well I marked the scarlet tinge
Her blue-branched eyelids wore.

A grassy ring of berries ripe
She o'er my finger drew ;
And they were wet, as though with tears—
It could not have been dew :

I caught her trembling hand in mine ;
 She gazed, she sighed, she flew ;
 And oft I've kissed that grassy ring,
 Far, far from where it grew.

A N N I E .

As I sat by the Lagan so clear,
 With its beauty and pride on my knee,
 Oh, I whispered her, " Annie, my dear !
 Thou art more than a kingdom to me ;
 To me, to me,
 Thou art more than a kingdom to me ! "

" Is it thus you can flatter ? for shame ! "
 Through a smile-pinioned sigh murmured she ;
 " Sure I know, though I'll mention no name,
 There's a maid you love dearer than me ;
 Than me, than me,
 There's a maid you love dearer than me ! "

And so bright grew her two living sloes,
 Whence a tear trickled downward so free,
 As a dewdrop might pass o'er a rose,
 But a thousand times sweeter to me ;
 To me, to me,
 But a thousand times sweeter to me ! "

" Then hear me, sweet love, in my soul ;
 Could'st thou only glance, thou would'st see
 From the tint of that last kiss I stole,
 Thou art ever an angel to me ;
 To me, to me,
 Thou art ever an angel to me ! "

" Then angels direct thee, my dear !
 But hearken me, Willie," said she,
 " When you fancy an angel's so near,
 Does the temple not dawn upon thee ?
 'Pon thee, 'pon thee,
 Does a temple ne'er dawn upon thee ? "

FAITHLESS HARRY.

Oh, love and truth ! ye gild our youth,
As moonbeams do yon meadow ;
The rising day finds all away,
And traceless as a shadow ;
Now by-gone days break through the haze
Of memory's fitful carry ;
And oh, they teem with many a dream !
You've read me darkly, Harry.

At dawn of day I love to stray
O'er Collin's pine-clad valley,
And hear the ring of joyous Spring,
That shakes the glittering holly :
And here, till clouds in golden shroud
Are curtains blue and starry,
Each eve I love alone to rove,
And dream of youth and Harry.

For here 'twas first this bosom nursed
The sickening wild emotion,
The young heart feels when first love steals
Its every chord's devotion :
Here first I pressed the anxious breast
Of him my soul had chosen,
Who hugged each heave this bosom gave
Ere his grew false and frozen.

And here we've sung the hours along,
When hope was high and heaving ;
When looks revealed what lips concealed,
And eyes were worth believing ;
When bosom-strings were holy things,
And love wished not to wander ;
When earth and sky were life and joy,
And Harry true and tender.

Ah, Collin-glen ! I thought not then
 That heaven and thou should witness
 Thy proudest flower, by bank or bower,
 Throw poison through its sweetness ;
 'Twas done, 'twas done ! the flower is gone ;
 But, though its poisons tarry,
 My heart would wreath the air I breathe
 In blessings for thee, Harry !

T O N O R A H.

I LOVED thee, my Norah, ere bosom or soul
 Knew a name for the feeling they could not control ;
 I love thee this moment as dear as before,
 And what should a faithful one say to thee more ?
 But hearken me, Norah ! and mark me the while,
 Thine ear was too open to slander and guile :
 Ah, what is that love but a hate in disguise
 That would measure the heart by the hue of the eyes ?
 The beauty for me is the bosom sincere,
 And the eye's witching hue is the spirit that's there ;
 The lip that would flatter thee may not be mine,
 For a hater of guile is a lover of thine !

But go in thy frowning—yea, go if thou wilt !
 Be feasted, be poisoned, with falsehood and guilt ;
 Not mine is the spirit to fawn or complain—
 No, nor offer one sigh at the shrine of disdain :
 But though stainless thy soul as the foam on the breath
 That the white lips of Winter blow over our heath,
 One step from thy lover shall change it from white,
 To a thing darker dyed than the pinions of night :
 The lay of thy lover 's untutored and rough,
 But it tells thee his heart, and let that be enough :
 The lip that would flatter thee may not be mine,
 But a lover of truth is a lover of thine !

They told thee the love that this bosom hath nursed
 Was cold and polluted when offered thee first ;

'Twas warmer, he tells thee, by many compares,
Than aught in those icicle fountains of theirs :
They love thee ! Ah, ha ! what a tale they can tell—
I know them—their envies and jealousies well ;
And hear me, my Norah : should all in their souls
Grow black as the lava of death where it rolls,
Then melt round thy lover, o'erwhelming as fate,
In a stream, aye, an ocean, of malice and hate—
Do thou but be truthful in word and design,
And a minstrel of Erin 's a lover of thine !



AN AMERICAN WAR-CHANT.

Be ours no cold, inglorious strains,
Of tyrant's tortures, tears and chains,
 And friendships few and cold ;
No traitor's blood, in native veins,
 Columbia's mountains hold.
Then rise, Columbia ! rise anew,
And talk as freemen's sons should do ;
For here, to-day, are hands as true
As e'er the patriot's weapon drew
 When country's wrongs were told !
And proudly can our New World boast
Of many a dauntless hero's host,
 Who boldly blocked our shore,
Till every billow round our coast
 Was capped with foemen's gore.
Then, up ! and tell the plundering knaves,
To mark a play-ground for their slaves,
For we, howe'er the tempest raves,
Have might enough to stain the waves
 As deeply as before !
They think our fathers' weapons rust ;
Ha, ha ! they'll find, if draw we must,
 Our free-flung starry flag
Shall dance, as erst, above the dust,
 Where rots their murderous rag.

For though the bolts of heaven sleep
When soothing breezes o'er them sweep,
At friction's touch the slumberers leap ;
And soon your tallest tow'ring steep,
In mould'ring mounds is spread !

Though gentle as the lamb unshorn,
That timorous eyes the dews of morn,
Columbia knows her right :
Then let them plant their foreign thorn
Betwixt her and her light,
And soon the hostile field shall be
The ballroom, boys, for you and me.
Then on, ye tyrants ! till ye see
One sweep of Yankee chivalry—
Would, glory, 'twere to-night !

Our stars, our stars, methinks they fly
In flashing volumes to the sky ;
Ha, ha, that wild hurra !
He comes—the plunderer, draw him nigh ;
Walk on, 'tis Yankee play ;
And now Columbia's lightnings flash,
And now her mettle thunders crash ;
He wheels—he reels—his columns smash !
Hurra ! move on—they're trembling trash !
No Yankee trip have they !

Then here's to those could lead us through
The widening field, whose deepening hue
Were aught but Yankee blood !
And here's to those have soul to do
What nobly Yankees could !
Ay, though in every mountain pass,
Each shrub should rise an armed mass,
With every leaf a foe's cuirass,
Or, scowling on each blade of grass,
A jewelled robber stood !

M Y M O L L Y .

I NEVER liked the gaudy rose,
 O'er flashing beauty's features stealing :
 But well I love the chastened snows,
 That speak the soul of thought and feeling :
 And, oh, my Molly's face is fair
 As foam upon the sea-bird's pinion :
 And Molly's eyes and Molly's hair
 Are dark as Winter's black dominion :
 My gentle girl, my living pearl,
 My hope, my heart and soul are in you :
 And well I know, for weal or woe,
 'Twas Heaven that taught me how to win you !

And I've seen Molly's forehead blaze,
 As if the heavens had drained light's fountain,
 And sprinkled all the ruddy rays
 On yonder tall and snowy mountain :
 'Twas then she sighed—" My heart is thine ! "
 Oh ! how I clasped my weeping flower ;
 And hugged the heaving gift to mine,
 With more, methinks, than human power !
 Oh, she's my girl, my living pearl,
 My mild, my meek, my timid Molly ;
 And soon, oh, soon, as peeps the moon,
 I know who'll walk beside the holly !

M Y E M M A .

THE birds in bush and bower,
 Have sung the daylight from the vale ;
 And tree and shrub and flower
 Have flung their fragrance on the gale :
 And round, and richly smiling,
 The moon looks over Castlereagh ;
 While cloudy cliffs are piling
 Their golden isles upon her lee.

And oh ! I love the twilight,
When drunken daisies sip their dew ;
It brings to mind the gay night,
When, Emma, first I met with you.

And love ! 'twas on a May night
When bounding youth and trusting love,
Amid the silvery gray light,
Were tripping round Montgomery's grove.
Oh, how my heart was swelling
As round we swept it hand and hand ;
For true each pulse was telling.
What both so well did understand.
And still I love the twilight, &c.

Thy face was fair as morning,
When cloudless are the heavens high ;
Their brightest blue adorning
The lightning fountains of thine eye ;
And in the moonbeams glancing,
Thy ringlets, rich of golden stain,
Fell o'er thy shoulders dancing,
Till all my spirit danced again.
And oh I love the twilight, &c.

And though that light may grow drear,
That speaks from out those eyes of thine,
This holy truth I know, dear,
Their sun of love shall ever shine :
Let beauty's flowers go wither,
When time has drunk their nursing dew ;
'Twas truth bound us together,
And that's the bloom that keeps its hue.
And still I love the twilight,
When drunken daisies sip their dew ;
It brings to mind the gay night,
When, Emma, first I met with you.

RAVEN-HAIRED MARY.

By night or by day, though I watch or I wander,
My bosom but changes from fondness to fonder ;
And *mine* was the heart of its fondness right chary,
Till bathed in the eye-light of raven-haired Mary.

Say, know ye my Mary ? by these may ye mark her :
Take eyes that are hazel, or what you'd know darker ;
For cheeks, the red poppy—your roses, confound them !
For forehead, white lilies when morn's walking round them.

To those add a lip like the pimpernel*-blossom,
Your blackest, your whitest for tresses and bosom ;
The form of an angel, the foot of a fairy,
And there ye have something like raven-haired Mary.

Though her tongue may the tones of a stranger inherit,
Oh, Erin, she's thine in the depths of her spirit ;
And rich were the glories with which you were laden,
Could laurels be plucked by the hand of a maiden.

And, hearing her songs, when at evening I meet her--
No bard of the *Nation* could sing to you sweeter !
Thyself, holy Freedom, such strains must have taught her :
Oh, I'd wander the world with you, music's own daughter !

Your lutes and your linnets—aye, e'en the harp scorning,
I'd sit from gray eve till the bright yellow morning ;
And follow the foeman till fancy were weary,
Led on by the song of my raven-haired Mary !



THE HEART-STRICKEN.

SHE dreamed of the isle of her home and her pride
And saw it was fair and delighting ;
She stood where its mountains arose on each side,
And looked on her green and inviting :

*A small plant, found in corn fields, bearing a rich scarlet flower.

She felt the wild beat
Of the heart, as her feet
Again touched the dear daisied valley,
That held the bright spot
Where her father's low cot
Peeped white through the hawthorn and holly.

She dreamed she was young—for the days she had mourned
Again in their pride seemed arisen ;
The years and the sports of her childhood returned,
And grief met her eyes like a vision :

And oh, as the tears,
And the sorrows of years,
Sad mem'ry, in misty confusion,
Drew tremblingly by
In her dreaming mind's eye,
She laughed at the faithless delusion !

She saw the young lamb snowy white at her knee,
O'er which her young heart often panted ;
She saw the wild rose and the dear cherry tree,
The hands of a brother had planted ;
Then mantled in light,
(As the lark winged his flight,
To load the young sunbeams with praises)
She smiled on her feet,
Glowing white as a sheet
With the dew and the fringes of daisies.

She felt her worn limbs in an ecstacy trip,
As she yearned for the clasp of a father ;
She felt her young heart dancing up to her lip,
To be bathed in the kiss of a mother ;
But even in sleep
Are there blisses too deep
To be borne by a heart-stricken ranger ;
Soon reason's day broke,
And the dreamer awoke,
All alone, in the land of a stranger !

THE OUTWARD-BOUND BARQUE.

DREAR as death fluttered eve o'er the outward-bound barque

As the foam and her white sheets rose o'er her ;

And proudly she waltzed o'er the silvery dark,

That in music and majesty bore her ;

And sad was the maid

Through whose curls the winds played,

O'er that vessel so fearfully heaving ;

And wild through the haze,

All the soul in her gaze,

Shrieked adieu to the shore she was leaving !

But she raises her face—and, ah heaven ! 'tis fair

As thy moonlight on Collin's red heather ;

Turn, turn thou old man with the long hoary hair,

For the maiden has called thee her father ;

'Twas a cloud o'er his eye,

As he coldly strode by,

Sent her wild gaze again o'er the billow ;

To which, low and lone,

She is breathing her moan,

And the old man at rest on his pillow !

And away with the blast is the noble barque gone,

The gallant green wave dashing over ;

And away are the shores that the maiden gazed on,

Though in soul she's yet there with her lover :

Ah, a cold-hearted one

Is the hoary-haired man,

And a wealthier hand he has sought her ;

'Tis the poor yellow ore

That he values much more

Than the peace of his angel-like daughter !

But still o'er the wave sweeps the snowy-winged barque,

And still is the lonely one weeping ;

And ah, but the heavens grow fearful and dark,

While the man with the gray hair is sleeping :

But is it a sigh
Smites the gale in the eye ?
Ah, the maiden's pale lips are in motion ;
And they pinion a prayer
With the breath of despair,
As she looks from the sky to the ocean !

And the wave prouder bounds to the tempest's wild spring
With a voice as when dreameth the thunder ;
For cloven it is by the loveliest thing
Ever drove the green waters asunder !
And sadly the tide
And the spent wind has sighed,
As though kindred spirits were speaking ;
Whose voices, so drear,
Smote the helmsman's ear,
Like the groan of a young heart when breaking !

.

Light, light waltzed the barque to the breezes mild stave,
Nor ocean nor heaven looked dreary ;
For the tempest had danced with the gaudy white wave,
Till their mirth made the mighty ones weary :
And gaily the gleam
Of the yellow sunbeam
Walked over the slumbering water,
And a maniac was there
Wildly flinging gray hair
On the broad ocean grave of his daughter !

SONG OF THE WORLD-SICK.

Oh tell me not another year
Will brighter skies reveal to me ;
I want no rainbow round my bier—
It is not hope can heal me.

When every hour but hurls a dart
At lingering life's dominion ;
And every moment sweeps my heart
With cold-blood wasting pinion.
Then tell me not the days will fall
More bright than e'er befel me :
But when ye think I've seen them all,
Oh ! if ye love me, tell me.

I feel my sun has walked its course,
And woeful world I loved thee ;
Till falsehood's more than lever force,
From hope and thee removed me :
Removed me, ah ! still round my soul
Thy light and darkness linger,
Despising more the heart's control,
Than death's cold wav'ring finger ;
But tell me not that days will fall
More bright than e'er befel me ;
For if ye think I've seen them all,
'Twere more of love to tell me.

Love ! what is love ? A fairy note
Of mere ideal sweetness,
That through our gayer *dreams* may float,
To mock them with its fleetness :
The minstrel-man may sweep his lyre,
And dream of loves around him :
But though their fires should melt the wire,
'Twas but his fancy found them :
Then tell me not another year
Will brighter skies reveal me ;
I want no rainbow round my bier,
It is not hope can heal me.



GENIUS AND NO MOONSHINE.

SINGULARLY SUBLIME AND SUBLIMELY SINGULAR.

THE city clock has numbered ten ;
The city lights are blazing ;
While round the gas-trees, now and then,
Night's natty nymphs are hazing :
And all the dark blue arch above,
With pearly points is peppered ;
But mistress moon ! hast fallen in love
With some Australian shepherd ?
Or dost thou on some cloudy throne
Lie dreaming of thy beauty ?
Speak, queen of night, by regal right,
And stars must do thy duty !
Already done—lo ! one by one,
The glittering millions muster,
From that which herds the setting sun,
To those that form the cluster ;
Not pencilled points like moonlit snow,
From merry mortals shrinking,
But fearless orbs of fiery glow,
The dreary darkness drinking ;
Now here, now there, they come and go,
As if they o'er some farce below,
Were at each other winking !
A glorious night for minstrel rakes
To be upon “the sly,”
Apostrophising ducks and drakes,
Or strewing oaths and cudgel-stakes,
On every passer-by ;
Or groaning till each alley quakes,
And even town-bred echo wakes,
And from her young brick-bosom shakes
Out something like a sigh ;
Or giving some old hawker's cakes
Free passage towards the sky,
While for the *watch* the vendor *hakes*

With mournful melody ;
And then a race,
Grip-gull in chase,
While lamps and windows fly ;
And catch him ! catch him ! roars the " peg,"
And catch him ! catch him ! sings " swell-tag,"
In well affected cry :
Or wheeling round in catch-him's face,
Deciphers forfeit and disgrace,
Hallo, stand off ! " you're mine !" a *case* ?
Take that, now ! there you lie.
Stern world thou frown'st when genius breaks,
By midnight inspiration's freaks,
Some dozen windows, skulls, and beaks,
Or wins a flashy eye :
Not thine to feel her warmth of soul,
Or see the huge internal coal,
On which her heart-strings fry !
Know then, ye cold-souled, grovelling oxes,
(Whose prosy heads she breaks or boxes)
Like Sampson's brand inspired foxes,
Amongst you, ragged, wrung, and riven,
Is hapless, helpless, Genius driven,
And knows not how or why.

MATT MUCKSTAVE.

CELESTIAL genius ! fire divine !
Than Horeb's more amazing,
In which this mighty brain of mine,
Is every fibre blazing ;
Avaunt, thou cold prosaic world—
Is't mind like mine you'd tether ?
With whiskey-punch, and whiskers curled,
I'm all inspired together !

I was not born for common things ;
No, no, my mission's high work ;
And if to grace the halls of kings,
Why wandering like a sky-lark ?
My wings are fledged for higher fame,
I'll rise, I must, I know it !
For Matt Muckstave's a mighty name,
And to the world I'll show it.

I've thumped the watchman black and blue,
And still escaped their ordeal ;
I might been wealthy as a Jew,
But genius loves the cordial :
Your vales and lakes have bayless skies,
And day-drones hurt our morals ;
But mountain-dew, and midnight boys,
Turn even weeds to laurels.

I've sucked old Wonder's inmost vein,
From 'fore Sinbad the sailor,
Down till the days when wicked Cain
Threw Jonah from the whaler ;
Globes, cones, and sections—worldly fools,
May stretch your education !
But Matthew's mind's above your schools,
He learns by inspiration.

The breadths and tints of earth and sky,
Ere moping mortals knew them,
By mystic, innate geography,
Matt needs but look, and view them.
Oh, had I lived in Noah's time,
His pride had ta'en the canter,
For I'd have found Columbia's clime
Before his ark weighed anchor !

But here I'm now, and here I vow
The wagging world shall wonder ;
For cleave I will the laurel bough
Was cracked by Byron's thunder ;

I know my path, I see it clear,
'Tis bright as eastern story ;
Come out, cigar, I'll light you here !
Hough ! Matthew walks in glory !

So sung the minstrel, Matt Muckstave,
Minutely measuring Mill Street pave,
With hat awry, and gestures grave,
And eyelids just ajar :

For Matthew, in his fancy's flight,
Had left the prosy world outright,
And got among the orbs of night ;

So, grasping at a star,
With more than modern minstrel grace,
Plump in the eye of murdered space,
He hiccuped thrice—while from its case

He drew a flash cigar !

Star-lit cigars—ay, ay, ay, ay !—
We'll clothe our cupboards, by-and-bye,
With twinklers stolen from the sky ;
For wondrous heights can genius fly :
(Pooh, heaven itself is not so high)

When *Bacchus* drives her car !

But what is Matt just now about ?

We're wandered out of tune :
Think ye the bard has scented out

The bed-room of the moon ?

No, no ! nor has he gained the star,

For still it twinkles on ;
But though he cannot stretch so far,

Still Matt's a mighty man :
For, with a truly splendid crash,

Head foremost through a window sash,

Cigar and he have gone !

" Oh, glory of mind ! what's this ? stand off !

" What brought thee here, sir ?" nought :

Those lights—my oh ! I was not half

So near them as I thought.

" Your name ?" Muckstave ! oh, what a plight !
 A mass of blood and scars ;
 " We'll call the watch, he'll set thee right,
 Thou man of wine and wars !"
 Oh, sirs, the soul of genius bright
 I am, I am—that's true as light !—
 But plague on those cigars !
 My fame, my head—I'm murdered quite ;
 Oh, Juno, Jove, and Mars,
 Adieu !—Ah, sirs, I've found to-night
 A bard may be a wondrous height,
 And *not* among the stars !



T H O U G H T S.

'Tis eve, and the priest of the red-winged hour
 Is chanting his hymn from the dew-gemmed bower,
 But oh, little bird, it is not thy tone,
 Nor the spring-bloom snow of thy hawthorn throne,
 That can give to a woe-worn heart like mine
 The joy that awakens that strain of thine :
 For I've been in the world since I heard thee last,
 And an age I have lived in the year gone past ;
 And from all I have seen to my life's first days,
 Does my sick soul turn with a yearning gaze.
 But not for the hopes of her youth she sighs,
 They were false as the light of a wanton's eyes ;
 But she yearns for a heart like thine own at rest,
 Thou sweet little bird of the pale red breast !
 And as broad and as bright as the cloudless ray
 Of a schoolboy's embryo holiday,
 Did the pictured paths of my future seem
 When that strain could have winged my darkest dream :
 But a faithless pencil, Fancy, is thine,
 The light was your own, but the shade is mine ;
 Now that future's the past, and it well hath taught
 That the world wasn't all that my young heart thought.

If I warmed in its sun, I have shrunk in its snow,
And in friendship I've found but a tinselled foe ;
With a tongue of love, and a heart of guile,
And a brow adorned with a moonshine smile,
Ay, a smile or a *frown* as its planet shed
A light or a darkness o'er my head.
What wonder I'd turn from the world in tears,
To the holy peace of my infant years,
When my young soul danced to thy worldless lay,
Thou little winged priest of the dying day !

Sing on, little bird ! for I love thy strain ;
And this heart—oh, 'twould fain be the child's again ;
For it leaps to my lip as thy rich notes rise,
And it melts at the tint of the golden skies.
And that world—oh, that world which I thought so fair,
Can it be there is nothing but falsehood there—
Have I looked upon man through a cloudy veil,
That has darkened the glory of truth's own seal ?
Think, soul ! is the marvellous "whole" untrue ?
Speak, heart ! was there nothing of blame in you ?
Ah, a still small voice in my spirit's ear,
Speaks words that the vain flesh shrinks to hear :
"Wouldst thou value the whole by the worthless shreds,
May be thrown on the path one wanderer treads :
Or is it the scale of one erring mind,
Wherewith thou wouldst measure all human kind ?
Look around thee again, for the meanest clod
Is a love-page signed by the hand of God ;
And its light or its darkness often lies
In the soul that looks through the reader's eyes !"



WAS IT A VISION.

What's woman's love ? "A woman's cram."
 Her truth ? "You'll never hear it."
 Her innocence ? "A sucking sham :
 I'll find you those would swear it."
 Alas ! and swear the flies of June,
 Were steeds, if men would mount them—
 Ay, find us maggots in the moon—
 Ask Slander, and she'll count them.

In the brightness of a rainbow
 And the beauty of its dyes,
 In the chasteness of a spirit
 Came the ill before his eyes,
 And he bowed his soul before it,
 Panting, yearning to adore ;
 Yea, and though it proved a woman,
 Still he worshipped it the more !

Did they say it was forbidden—
 Then an Eve-like feeling rose,
 And his frenzied Fancy sought it,
 Even through his brain's repose,
 Hourly forming fairy chambers
 In the palaces of thought,
 Where on passions flaming pinions
 She the gilded viper brought.

And his fond soul, fresh and glowing,
 Grew before the deadly thing,
 As the young moon swell in beauty,
 Till she veils her ghostly ring !
 Yea, his spirit twined around it
 To a heaven-height of bliss,
 Through an hour of joy unequalled
 Save by the despair of this.

Oh ! the mildness and the music
 Of her every look and tone,
 Till his light and darkness melted,
 And she moulded them her own.

Oh, that heart, and how he worshipped ;

 Oh, each sacrifice he made ;

Oh, that smile that with the feelings

 Of a truthful soul could trade.

And he might have seen his madness,

 And he should have passed it by,

For the fearful word "deceiver"

 Glared, they whispered, from her eye.

Oh ! the temples of our nature,

 With what marvels are they built,

If a tower of such beauty

 Be the nestling place of guilt.

Beauty, beauty ! What is beauty ?

 'Tis a painted poison-bowl ;

Yea, a withering woe that gushes

 Through an eye-beam to a soul.

Now he'd kiss the deadly upas,

 So his heart-blight breathed not there,

But he'd fear the light of heaven

 Could it fall in form so fair.

Still, the love, the love he bore her,

 Though impressed with Heaven's seal,

Was what Heaven could not hallow,

 And a mortal should not feel.

And it must depart his bosom,

 Though each chord thereof should bleed,

Or his soul dissolve to vapour

 Through the frenzy of the deed.

What were the past and present

 When he clasped his bosom's queen ;

The future or its flowers,

 If her dark eyes shone between.

Oh ! the cleaving blast of winter,

 To his lone breast, bleached and bare,

He'd have hugged, and held from breathing

 On one ringlet of her hair.

Aye, the burning beam of heaven
 He'd have bound within his brain,
Ere the glowing thing had given
 To her brow one yellow stain.
But, 'tis over, all is over,
 All is said that needs be said ;
And his heart, could she behold it—
 Oh ! the reeking wreck 'tis made !

A FRAGMENT.

A BRIGHTER sun, a taller sky,
 Or fields of more bewitching green,
Ne'er hung, or rose before the eye,
 Than those around young Kate M'Clean :
Where Ireland's king of caverned steeps,
 Old Ulster's glory, lifts his brow,
And palsied ruin bows and weeps
 Those rocky tears that, round her now
 A field of budding hills appear,
 As if young Nature laboured here,
 Till these unfinished mountains tell
 The wonders of her workshop well ;
But Kate has other thoughts than these,
 'Tis not the love of sky, or sun,
Or hill, or flower, or ocean breeze,
 Or yet the grove of alder trees,
 Her weeping walk has won.

And but a few short hours have fled,
 Since her long tresses on the air,
Revealed the brightest brow that led
 The dance that crowned our Summer fair.
For Kate had tripped upon the sward
 With heart as pure and foot as fleet
As ever led creation's lord
 To bow a knee at woman's feet,

Until the sun's last rosy ray
Had pencilled down another day,
And Heaven, through many a golden tear,
Smiled fondly o'er our park of deer,
And like a bow of silver wire,
Or beauteous fragment of a ring,
To chase night's tears of living fire,
And light the feet that would not tire,
The infant moon came wandering !

But pleasure ne'er so swiftly flies
As when her pinion cleaves the air
That must arise, in burning sighs,
Before 'tis known she travelled there ;
And ne'er below a smile appears
With half the radiance in its ray,
As that which melts itself to tears
Before we've time to wish its stay.
Oh ! could we only learn to prize
The first, the best of human joys,
As passing glimmerings of a light,
By far too pure for human sight—
A something only met to part,
Or wound the spirit if it stay ;
'Twould wrench the barb from many a dart
That Hope leaves rankling in the heart,
When she and all that's dear decay.

Now seven times, and something more
Has Winter warred with gray M'Art,
Since Kate M'Clean and Huston Gore
Knew when to meet, but not to part.
And shall we blame them, if to-day,
They break through every curb of care,
To turn their hearts the good old way
Our fathers used to hold the fair.
No ; joy be theirs till rock and knoll,
Ring back the laugh of soul to soul,

Their feet shall tread the paths of pain,
Ere thus they foot the turf again :
Well, ne'er beneath or sun, or moon,
Or roof of peasant, prince, or peer,
Six human hearts kept time and tune
With those that leaped that afternoon
Within our own old park of deer.

But now the golden bloom of sky
Is veiled with softer, paler, gray ;
And like a death-smit maiden's eye,
Each twinkling glory shrinks away.
The dance has ceased—the joyous stave,
From lip, from glen, and crag recedes,
And gaily towards our mountain-cave
Each youth his panting partner leads.
The maidens start—the rugged den
Is changed, they know not how, or when ;
Instead of darkly oozing damps,
The roof is gem'd with starry lamps,
That curve and crook their streamy flame.
Round harp and helm, and horn and spear,
And girt with mountain-daisy frame ;
Behold, each wondering maiden's name,
In magic beauty doth appear.

And every sweet, young Summer knows,
Doth here its glistening tribute crowd,
The walls seem only floral snows,
Embosomed on a laurel cloud ;
A couch, the rose's tint and breath,
Wild hyacinth and poppy red,
And pink, and daisy underneath,
Embrace the ankle every tread ;
And glowing like a veil of light,
The screen that turned the breath of night,

Was silk and silver through and through,
And studded o'er with myst'ry too :
A falling throne, a broken crown,
A headless trunk, an open grave,
A mountain camp, a burning town,
Religion collar'd by a clown,
With—"Heaven makes no slave!"

.

Now wonder wanes—an auburn curl
Is tossed from Aileen's hazel eye,
While Mary—"Well, I'd give the world
To know how this was done, and why."
But Kate, all trembling, drew a veil
Of night-black ringlets o'er her brow,
And Kate, at best, was something pale,
But never, never, aught like now.
And Huston's colour rose and fell
With snowy ebb and rosy swell,
As if the spirit toiled and sought
To fix a tint would tell no thought ;
But eyes are tell-tales of the soul,
That seldom choose to own its power,
And his, " 'Tis well, but on the whole
I fear the gildings of our bowl
Are far too bright for such an hour."

Thus, as the fairest, purest snow
Will chill the hand that meets it bare,
That hour of joy ne'er flew below
Without some feather tipped with care ;
And we might live to love such yet,
Though with them now each feeling wars,
For when the sun of passion's set,
They may become our guiding stars.
But Huston, though he felt the spell
Of beauty breathing through that cell,

And though he stood as spirit-bound,
And viewed the spot as holy ground,
He also felt its charm of charms
Had waked a wave of icy thought
That yet might take a thousand forms
Between his soul's wish and the arms
That then with trembling hopes she caught.

But white, beneath the torrid ray,
As well could mount a lustrum's snow,
As curdling care assert his sway
O'er blood so healthy in its flow.
Now love and truth are side by side,
What there could love or truth condemn ?
The world without, indeed, might chide—
The world within 's the world to them.
And Con M'Crea has spread a feast,
And Edgar ban has played the priest,
And Mary smiles, but thinks it wrong,
Her brother stays so very long.
'Tis strange he strolls so much of late,
And more than she had heard him say
That very morn, "To-night he'd wait
Upon herself and sister Kate
Before the moon had swam the bay."

But hark ! along the distant gale,
What trips so like a trumpet stave ?
Hush, hush, my Kate ; 'tis but the wail
With which the sea-bird woos the wave,
And were it else, my pallid pearl,
These mountains, love, are Erin's own,
On which no free-born Irish girl
Should tremble at a trumpet's tone !
"Freeborn, thou said'st ? It was not so,
Methinks, a few short hours ago !
What happy hand, since then, has broke
That gall of thine—a foreign yoke ?

Oh, Huston, Huston, leave thy dreams—
Thou knowest, love, this heart of mine
Is yet a field of pleasant streams,
But play not thou the Summer beams,
To drink and dry them whilst thou shine !”

• • • • •

T H E W O R L D .

SING oh, for the world ! the merry green world !

In the glorious days long, long, ago,

When apprentice Time,
With a laughing chime,

Declared it would eat at his heart, like crime,

To wither one beautiful leaf below :

When a harp he made,
Of his crescent blade,

And vowed he would learn no slaughtering trade.

But he'd sing to the roll of the infant sphere,

And he'd whistle her on in her bright career.

Oh ! the music that rose,
From his merry young toes,

At the morning's dawn and the daylight's close,

Till the wantoning stars shot down to hear ;

Then, as sunk the red sun in a sigh of light,

To his lady-love the moon,
Was the dove caressed,

In the eagle's nest,

And the dreaming fawn, on the brown bear's breast

Took a dance to his cradle tune.

Sing oh, for the world ! the merry young world !

When her infant days and her infant joy

Went streaming along,
Like an angel's song,

Unsprinkled by sorrow, unshaded by wrong ;

When a marvellous thing was a mortal's sigh,

Ere over our world,
Our beautiful world,
Was the pirate flag of Might unfurled ;
When heart to heart was truthful and kind,
And the glory of Matter stood Emperor MIND !
When the tinsel'd rules
Of Formality's schools
Were left to be learned by the fops and fools
That an icy glittering age should find ;
When the flowers of friendship feared no blight
From Candour's gardening gear,
Though it hurried each shoot,
From Vanity's root,
If there omen'd a birth of the moonshine fruit,
That Flattery loves to rear.

Sing oh, for the world ! where the merry old world
Declares she is ever as changeless as fair ;
Where Nature 's as gay,
When her spirit would play,
As she was on the sun and the moon's birth-day.
What a mighty and merry old world we've there,
When the billow unfurls
A tempest of curls,
And the snowy white mass o'er the broad blue hurls,
While the laugh of her heart through the dark arch
rings,
As she starts from her couch on the whirlwind's wings,
To the kiss of the proud
Wooing thunder-cloud,
Whose spirit walks forth in a fiery shroud,
To welcome the love that the wanton brings ;
Or, again, by the wave when the storm's at rest
And the evening skies so fair,
Hang over the deep,
Like an ocean asleep,
Or a desert of gold, where the silvery sheep
Go wandering here and there.

Yet, hurra for the world ! the beautiful world !
For traitorly Time right little recks she,
 When the rainbow wing
 Of sunny-eyed Spring
O'ershadows the throne of the Winter king—
 What a green—what a merry old world have we !
 Then each tassel of snow
 A young glory does grow
Over hill, over dale, to glisten and glow,
 And the primrose blossoms toss up their heads,
 Like a shower of stars o'er their emerald beds,
 And the heavens appear,
 More blue and more clear,
And the minstrel bee slips out to hear
 How the wild rose sings where the sunbeam treads ;
Then the song that gushes from Nature's soul
 Over many a wordless tongue,
 Proclaims in its might,
 As she trembles in light,
Through ages of anguish and mortal-made blight,
 Still the green old world keeps young !

MY BROWN-BROWED GIRL.

LET the pale ones of the town
 Sing of lilies and of snows,
Through a cheek of sunny brown,
 Jenny's coral current flows ;
And I'd rather see that stain
 Of the day-beam's yellow rain,
Than the townly tints that speak
 Of a heart bleached sterile,
On the purely polished cheek
 Of my brown-browed girl !

Let the fancy-stricken one,
 For his pallid beauty's brow,
Borrow ringlets from the sun,
 Or the moon—if she allow ;

But give me the sweeping tress,
 In its inky loveliness,
 Writing down the ebb and flow
 Of that wave-like pearl—
 For a breast of living snow
 Has my brown-browed girl !

Do they sing of gilded halls ?
 Oh ! I'd rather, love, be found
 Where the blue and yellow walls
 Of the heavens glisten round,
 While your heaving heart's eclipse,
 Stealing, tiptoe, through your lips,
 Breaks in music o'er my soul
 Like the sky-birds' carol,
 " Ever thine, through weal and dole,
 Is your brown-browed girl ! "



WISHES AND WISHERS.

Oh ! know ye the wish of the true, the true ?
 Oh, know ye the wish of the true ?
 'Tis to see the slave's hand,
 Whirling Liberty's brand,
 As its toil-nurtured muscles could do,
 And the wide world's oppressors in view :
 Hurra ! for that wish of the true !

Then hurra for that wish of the true, the true !
 Hurra for that wish of the true ;
 And another hurra
 Far the fast coming day,
 When the many shall preach to the few,
 From a gospel as pure as the dew—
 Oh ! there's hope in that wish of the true !

Oh ! know ye the wish of the proud, the proud !
 Oh, know ye the wish of the proud ?

 'Tis to empty their veins,

 'Mid the crashing of chains,

Aye, the veins of their heart, if allowed,
 So the neck of oppression be bowed :
 What a holy wish that of the proud !

Then hurra for that wish of the proud, the proud !
 Hurra for that wish of the proud,

 And a sweeping hurra

 For the clash, flash, and neigh,

Where young Liberty leaps from the cloud
 That curls blue o'er her enemy's shroud.
 Oh ! the world for that wish of the proud !

Oh ! know ye the wish of the brave, the brave !
 Oh, know ye the wish of the brave ?

 'Tis to up with their brands,

 For the weal of *all* lands,

And to dance upon Tyranny's grave,
 Wheresoe'er its black banner may wave :
 Be strengthened thou wish of the brave !

Then hurra for that wish of the brave, the brave !
 Hurra for that wish of the brave,

 And hurra for the hand,

 And the casque-cleaving brand,

That the rights of the people can save,
 Or redeem, by its world-lighting wave—
 Hurra for the brand of the brave !

A LAY OF LABOUR.

I LOVE the springs your shuttle sings,

 As o'er the polished *race** it reels,

God bless the hand that can command,

 That lay of labour from its wheels.

* *Race*—The rod on which the shuttle runs in the loom.

Each TREAD, each SHOT, unties a knot,
By Misery's freezing fingers drawn,
On every thread that Hope would spread,
Before my toiling artisan.

In dewy gray, the morning ray,
Is fluttering round your window pane,
And, love, you know, an hour or so,
Will bring us, broad and bright again,
What lack of gold cannot withhold,
That light which Heaven, the humblest man
As freely gave as to the knave,
Who'd spurn my toil-paled artisan.

'Tis true that rest, my soul's request,
Were more than even light to you,
But laugh or weep, or toil or sleep,
The man of rents must have his due.
Nor should we mourn—there's many a turn
Before we reach the bourne of bliss ;
And if we start with soul and heart,
The way cannot be all like this.

But human toil 's a sterile soil,
If all the spirit be not there,
The path we'd walk, the soul must chalk,
And memory guard the line with care.
But as we strain with care and pain,
Remember, love, each worldly view,
When sought aright, reveals a light,
That leads us safely heavenward too.

For stations high, not ours to sigh,
Or seek them o'er unhallowed earth,
A sickly flow'r is wealth or pow'r,
If reared upon *one* ruined hearth.
And crowns of kings (oft bleaching things),
May leave the wearers' cheeks as wan,
As even thine, whose dewy shine,
Proclaims the night-worn artisan.

Be Mary's throne your heart alone,
 Let love and labour bring the rest,
 And pow'r shall be the same to me,
 As to this babe upon my breast :
 And wealth—this store I value more,
 Than garden-worlds of deathless bloom—
 My toiling one, my infant son,
 My wheel, and your good harness-loom.

'Tis thought your brow is paler now,
 Than when you won my girlish heart ;
 So let it be, its hue to me
 Was never, love, its better part ;
 The sallow stain is not the *brain*,
 Where angel thought matures the plan :
 For bird or flower, or town or tower,
 To swell beneath my artisan.

But see ! the sky grows blue and high,
 And flashing glories fringe each pane,
 Now thank you, Heaven, at last you've given
 The blessed light of day again :
 While to each gleam your STRIPPING-BEAM
 Reveals the rosy THRUM-YARD keel—
 God bless the hand that can command
 That music from the shuttle's wheel.

A L A M E N T,

INSCRIBED TO THOMAS WARD, BELFAST,
 IN MEMORY OF HIS BELOVED WIFE, HANNAH, WHO FELL A VICTIM TO
 TYPHUS FEVER, JULY 26, 1847.

Is't a grave for my Hannah, a bed in the earth,
 Ere the sun of your eyes is away from my hearth—
 Oh, they're clouding my brain with each tear streaming
 gaze,
 But my spirit shall rise and look out through the haze.
 What mean ye by talking of heaven, or bliss,
 And my lips trembling yet 'neath the print of her kiss ;

You leave me ! ah, never, my beauty, my dear,
Sure the ring of your laugh's yet alive on my ear,
And it isn't for even high heaven you'd go,
And torture the heart that has worshipped you so.
Oh ! the soul through my eyes shall be melted to dew,
Ere a flower shall wither so holy as you !

Oh ! the sweets of your soul, like the bloom on the bough,
Or the smile of an angel, was bound on your brow,
And your heart was so warm and sincerely unwise,
That it sent every thought, like a star, to your eyes.
Aye, your beaming blue eyes, that like spirits did speak,
When your grief, or your joy, lit the veins of your cheek ;
And the stain of that cheek in the calm of your mind,
Was the shadow of thought and of feeling combined.
Oh ! so pure and so white, and such blackness below,
Can I wonder you'd go from me, dearest—No, no ;
But you knew that our hearts so together had grown,
That the trembling of yours was a rent in my own.

Can I b'lieve that the yellow-winged Plague has the power
To snatch from my breast such a heart-healing flower ;
Can I b'lieve that the poison by pestilence nursed,
Shall be flung in the cup of our purest ones first.
Oh ! she shall not be changed to a frozen-up clod—
Who o'ershadowed my all, like the brightness of God—
For I'll watch by her couch, and each poisonous stain
I will wash from her brow with the hot spirit-rain ;
Aye, with tears from a fountain of feeling so deep,
That the wild Fever-woe shall but wonder and weep,
And the angel of mercy *shall* hallow the cup,
Though each drop were a death, and the last swallowed up.

There was love in your heart, there was truth in its core ;
There was light on my path when your feet went before ;
There was heaven below when I called you my bride,
And your hand was in mine, and I sat by your side,
Reading over past blisses, or pencilling more,
Until Fancy herself had exhausted her store !

And away went our souls in their ripeness of joy,
Kissing rosy-lipped clouds on Futurity's sky,
Where the only sad thought knew a path to each heart,
Was that one day the nearest and dearest must part.
Oh ! the world was one garden of glory to us,
And it can't be in heaven to sever us thus.

Then speak to me, dearest one ! love, wont you speak ?
Oh, the ice is your breast, and the snow is your cheek ;
And you're thinking not now of my song or my kiss,
And you'll wander no more with me—dearest, what's this ?
Ha ! the heatherd-hill gasps for the breath of the seas,
With the tall rocky ruins asleep on its knees ;
How they've play'd with your laugh as it leaped on the air,
And you clambered with me to the giant's stone chair ;
And I brought you the berries night-black from the glen,
Aye, and e'en the young rook from the lion's gray den !
And I taught you the dance of the sunbeams above,
Till your heart fell asleep in its tumult of love.

Then, arise ! oh, arise ! Do I rave—do I dream ?
Can the snowflake arise from the grasp of a stream ?
No, bird of my bosom, your spirit is gone,
And the purest it was ever Heaven called on :
And it isn't for me, dearest Father, to chide,
If you wanted an angel to sit by your side,
'Tis the grief of the heart—not the spirit—would speak,
Though I'm lonely without her, and selfish and weak ;
But to see—when that ring from the finger of death,
Spread its snow round her lips as they quivered for breath,
How her weary eye sought for me—Father on high !
Even You ! ay, You loved her still dearer than I !

'Tis over, 'tis over ! my dreaming is past ;
I have sat by you, love, and I've looked on your last ;
And they'll take you away, and they'll lay you to rest,
Where the grass and the weed shall grow tall on your
breast !

And corruption shall creep o'er your blood and your bone,
Till your eyes have forgot that their stars ever shone ;
And the worms round the cold slimy ruin shall twine,
Of a forehead that beamed like a blessing o'er mine.
Saviour, dear ! what a bed for the faithful and fair !
And you, bird of my bosom, they're taking you there.
Oh ! a lifetime of joy, or of fireside bliss,
Were too dear to be bought with one moment like this !

A L A Y,

SACRED TO THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

MARK ye where most envenom'd springs
That soul-saliva, greenly strong,
With which the would-be critic wings
His senseless slanders aimed at song ;
Yon'll ever find that putrid stream
(By soul abhor'd—by sense accr's'd)
Had been itself the very cream
Of measured nonsense at the first ;
But Imitation's moony beam
This mental starv'ling having nursed
Its would-be sentimental skin
(With neither blood, nor bone therein,
Nor heart, nor soul, with song to soar),
To poison melts, whose best—whose worst,
Is eat and canker to the core
The filthy fountain whence it burst.

Who would not write and rise a bard
In these aristocratic times,
If but to say—"I'm sovereign lord
Of several glorious roods of rhymes."
And who would not a critic be,
When, caged in every nook we pass,
In classic curb and curls we see
That living sham—a learnèd ass.

Who sports his metre, plumb and square,
And strains his puny shrimp-like soul,
To wing from out their venom'd lair
The ravings of a brainless bowl ;
To bind young Genius in her flight,
To lead the wondering world along,
Enchanted by that mystic light,
His more than gospel truths of song.

Hear me, ye bards of every grade,
From him who steals o'er buds and dew,
To him who whirls the warrior's blade,
And sweeps the thunder's pathway too !
Are ye to calmly yield the ghost,
At every vampire-babe's command,
Or thrum, to every varnished post,
Some nonsense it can understand ?

No ! leave the mules their squares and rules,
Let learnèd asses bray their bray ;
If Heaven be pleased to fashion fools,
What son of earth shall answer—" Nay ! "
True, true, 'tis hard to know the bard
Dissolve his soul in passion-fire,
To warm some frozen-hearted herd,
Who'd frown, though angels smote the wire.

But let them frown, 'tis all the same,
For me, I know, and for my lays,
I'd rather bear such creatures' blame
Than crawl beneath their grove of bays !
Poor fangless vipers, con your Greek,
But soul and sense are not so vain
As sit, where every fool may seek,
To change his ounce of slime to brain.

And hint, forsooth, that, in your strains,
Poor brethren of the lowly lay,
You've " popped on thoughts might grace the brains
Of persons born to rank and sway ! "

And odd it is, and strangely strange,
That Common Sense, the jade, should try
To drop herself within the range
Of some whose rags are fit to fly !

And stranger still, that Nature tries
To mingle with her meaner stuff,
What forms the rich (of course the wise),
When round her rots refuse enough !
It might be thus, the thoughtless wench
When boxing up your humbler man,
From her aristocratic bench,
Had swept a little star-japan.

Or haply just ere moulding one,
Of you, her no-souled—non-bred singers,
The slut had baked a NOBLEMAN !
Whose dazzling clay upon her fingers,
Had mingled with that meaner mass—
(Those parings of her workshop floor),
From which, of course, she moulds each ass
That *toils* on two feet, or on four.

But whencesoe'er the marvel spring,
Young gilded Brainless, now and then,
Doth really meet with certain *things*,
That want but wealth to make them *men* !
Away, away ye blind, and worse,
God's light around you, *won't* you see,
The song—the soul, and not the purse,
Must stamp the bard's—the man's degree.

For days have come, and *not* to pass,
When oft the richest gems of mind,
Can, to the lowliest of the mass,
Be even *now*, by POMP, assigned.
And mark me, brethren, look again :
Oft foremost of your foremost foes,
To fling, to stamp some senseless stain,
Is one who from your ranks arose.

M A R Y.

THERE was a time, right well you know,
Your lips were not of smiles so chary ;
There was a time—but let it go—
You would not thus have met your Mary.
But lone as is this heart of mine,
The soul you crush by looking coldly,
Before a brighter eye than thine,
Your guilt and guile may tell you boldly.

Your wrongs to me I've tried to brook ;
But Jemmy, Jemmy, there's another !
And oh ! 'tis hard to sit and look
Upon a poor heart-broken mother.
The long, long night, I lie and weep,
When little thinks she I'm awaken,
Who clasps me in her broken sleep,
With—"Heaven shield my poor forsaken !

I know you've found another love—
In human guile an unbeliever—
But, Jemmy, there's a Judge above,
And if you b'lieve so, don't deceive her ;
For though the fairest fruit may fall,
If there's one truth in my dark story,
Each heart you break shall rise a wall,
Betwixt your own poor soul and glory.

A moment more—when o'er your brow
Those chesnut locks fall thin and whitely,
And long forgot have been the vow,
And her and hers, you prize so lightly ;
Then should some fondled flower of thine,
Betraying bloom, like Mary's, blighted,
Wake but one tear for me or mine,
You're then forgiven, and I'm requited.

A WINTER CHANT.

Who sorrows for Spring—is it I ? No, no ;
Through the sun of her love there are shadows of snow,
And more holy to me were the fangs of the asp,
Than a heart having ice, and a hand for my clasp.
If you've hate, let it rage—if you've love, let it burn ;
For your hearts that are mediums, a beckon would turn ;
Then away with young silver-tongued simpering Spring,
Though she flirts now and then with young melody's wing,
Sure it flutters so faintly, in passing along,
You'd mistake for a sigh what she meant as a song.

For the feverish glare of a Summer-day sky
Who sighs or who sorrows ? Not I, not I !
Is it mourn for the fierce, flashing spirit of fire,
Who strikes mid-day melody dead at her lyre ;
Who quaffs off your streams and *inhumanly* sips
E'en the last drop of dew from the daisy's parched lips ;
Then you'll chant of her love, and you'll hymn to the sheen
Of her tresses of flame, and her flounces of green !
Be it so ; but her pinion's too brilliantly starred,
To be lumbered with love for a Democrat Bard.

Is it Autumn ! away with her coquettish frown—
Only kiss ye her lip and it withers ye brown ;
And she smiles and she sighs, and she frets and she fumes,
Till the yielding grove flings her its holiday plumes,
To be whirled through the floods, to be bleached on the grass,
Or flung up, with disdain, in your face as you pass.
Oh ! a pretty old pouter, brown Autumn, art thou,
With a boon in your bosom and death on your brow ;
But a curtain descends o'er yourself and your deeds,
Aye, and spun from the foam of your conqueror's steeds.

Then, hail to thee, Winter ! though stern and severe,
I can love even hate when I know it sincere,
And your grasp of a hand, like a patriot's lance,
Makes the soul of one tingle through every glance.

Then, you come undisguised, like our “ Faragh Aboo ! ”
With your heart at your lip, and a song in it too :
For old Winter’s a bard—sure a brother may tell—
And the forest’s a harp he can finger right well ;
Oh ! to hearken him there, when the muse he invokes—
What a war-whoop he wrings from the tottering oaks !

Then hip, hip, hurra ! for the harp and the song,
Of the true tempest burden, rush, rushing along ;
For we’re sick (who but knows ?) of their lute-risen sighs,
And their “ soft silver streams,” and their “ dear azureskies.”
And the rest of their would-be-the-elegant stuff,
And we turn to thee, Winter, proud, honest and rough.
Oh ! I’d rather be facing thy cloudiest frown,
When thou roll’st in thy rage o’er the shivering town,
Than be mantled in light in the gaudiest bower,
That ever nursed June and her fire-lipped flower.

It is Winter ! ha, ha ! he has love in his wrath ;
See his pearls, fair as light, sprinkled over your path,
And your streams, only look, peeping out, as ye pass,
With their sweetest of songs from his cages of glass !
But for me, let them leap from their precipice home,
Shrieking out, like despair, from a furnace of foam ;
Then away, like a bolt, o’er the red earth and rocks,
Till the whirlwind falls choaked with their carotty locks.
And the heavens ring, not with the SIGH of the RILLS,
But an anthem right meet for a child of the hills.

Then hurra for the bard of the world-sweeping wing,
And hurra for the harp of the earth-cleaving string,
And hurra for the waltz, and the whirl, and the wheel,
Of the uprooted oaks, crossed and tossed in the reel !
Oh ! I’d be with thee, Winter, by forest and wave,
And my heart beating time to your hurricane stave :
For there’s something so wild, and so fiercely sublime,
Aye, and fearlessly true, in your chant and your chime,
That they ring through my soul, like the shout of the free—
Then the flood, or the wood, and the tempest for me !

WATCH PAPERS.

NO. I.

If such as I you prize,
 According as they're true ;
 Just think what purer eyes,
 Might ask from such as you !

NO. II.

To the wary and the wise,
 Every hour is a slave !
 To the trifler and the fool,
 Every moment is a knave !

I M P R O M P T U.

I WOULD that I had never been—
 Or being, worn a sterner brow,
 For fully half the ills I've seen—
 And every one that wrings me now—
 Arose from nothing under God
 But softness of the soul and cheek ;
 Not that I ever kissed a rod,
 Or wept when I had wrath to speak,
 But here it lay—another's tear
 Was more than e'er my soul could bear !

GRAY-EYED SALLY.

THEY sing us eyes of heavenly blue,
 In many shades, sweet, soft, and holy,
 Be mine the tint of heaven, too,
 But *dark* as dawn the eyes of Sally :
 And oh, the purest sun of soul
 That ever soothed a fallen creature,
 Or changed a heart to living coal,
 Unclouded lights her every feature.

And is it for your blue's sick ray,
That's only dying when it dances,
I'd turn me from the starry gray,
That brighter beams as day advances.
And is it for the languid white
I used to love in "Timid Molly,"
I'd stray from out the spirit light
That trembles round my gray-eyed Sally.

You've seen the holy tint, that burns
Where day his dying embers gathers,
That into living glory turns
The skimming cloudlet's snowy feathers !
And I have seen, and tried to speak
My inward joy, the spirit's folly,
For oh ! 'twere pale beside thy cheek—
Thy bashful cheek, my gray-eyed Sally.

One closer clasp, my trembling bird,
For mine's the soul that *can't* deceive thee,
And you must *change* if ever word
Be born of my warm heart to grieve thee.
The canting world may shower its hate ;
I little reck it, which or whether—
I'm thine—your mine—so welcome fate,
We'll sink—we'll swim—or rise together !

THE SISTERS;

OR, DREAMS OF AN ENTHUSIAST.

A FRAGMENT.

THE twain were sisters. Sally seemed
The elder, and a peerless girl,
Beauteous and tall ; her white brow gleamed
O'er two dark waves, an arch of pearl ;
Her eyes were gray, of deepest shade,
And round her small red lips there played,

Ever and always, brighter waking,
That smile which tells 'tis the soul's own making,
While deeply on her scarlet cheek
One dimple curl'd, that could all but speak.

And toil was Sally's purest peace,
And with the wires, bright and long,
'Twas she that wove the curling fleece
To household wearing, white and strong,
And dress'd the food, and milked the kine,
And wash'd the linens, coarse and fine,
And ever gay and ever cheery,
I never heard her say, " I'm weary ;"
From five at morn till ten at night
She never sought the least respite.

We sat beneath a straw-capp'd cot,
Where groan'd the Bush* in white turmoil,
And I would say, so fair a spot,
Or such a queenly child of toil—
Save one—you'd meet not in a day,
No matter where you'd thread your way.
Oh ! never since has day died o'er me,
Without that glorious scene before me ;
And but that parting is such pain,
I'm sure I'd see it once again.

" Save one," I said—well, book nor dream,
Nor fancy e'er revealed to me
So very much of what you'd deem
A something sent from heaven should be ;
And in young Lizzie this was seen,
She might been somewhere near eighteen,
With rich dark eyes, soft, calm, and holy,
And paler cheek'd, a thought, than Sally ;
And when she spoke, and when she smiled,
Her soul seemed melting like a child !

*The River Bush, County Antrim.

Though Sally's curls were glorious things,
And dark as Desolation's frown,
O'er Lizzie's neck the richer rings
Made e'en the blackest blackness brown !
And such a tall, smooth, snowy brow—
I know of nothing like it now ;
And though her sister might been taller,
She fuller bosomed, waisted smaller ;
Sat—stood—appeared—at least, to me,
What young Perfection's self might be.

We sat beneath a straw-roofed shed,
A hoop of muslin, pencil'd blue,
Her white hands held, o'er which her thread
To snowy buds and flow'rets grew.
There, in her lightest, wildest, mirth,
I never traced one tint of earth,
So chaste—so mild in every feature—
God never made a purer creature ;
Oh ! how I wished, yea, wish it yet,
Dear Lizzie, we had never met !

I thought 'twas not in woman's power
To even tip my heart with pain,
I never looked upon that flower
That something did not crush my brain ;
But what it was I cannot say—
Could it be love for beauteous clay ?
God knows—but heaven has wondrous dealing
With every spring of human feeling :
And if it say, " We've worked—admire"—
Shall I refuse so poor a hire.

We walked—we passed the " Hill of Wine,"
And scarce one worded breath we drew,
But when her clear calm eye met mine,
You would have thought it fringed with dew.
'Twas strange, methinks, how that could be,
Into my heart she could not see,

And I'd have let that heart be broken
Before one single word, or token,
Had TOLD, or GIVEN the slightest pain
To one I ne'er might see again.

Through "Shervie's grove" a pathway shoots,
 Along the dark gray river's bed,
And sighing, like a world of flutes,
 The boughs embrace above your head :
You'd think it hard at even-tide,
On such a spot—she by your side,
Who is, perhaps, the only being
On whom you feel your sight is seeing—
To stray, and strangle in your brain
The thoughts that fire its every vein.

And, Lizzie, we have wander'd there
 Without the 'change of e'en a sigh,
Or aught that could one thought declare
 Beyond what fluttered through the eye ;
Yet, on a stile I've seen you stand
And seek and take my helping hand,
And then I've thought each long white finger
Was somehow pleased in mine to linger,
But what ! a word, one look, one sigh,
Or three short steps, and all was by.

We sat, and from the "Clogher Caves,"
 Beheld the broad full-bosomed ships,
When far above them and the waves
 The white clouds' bright vermillion lips
Betrayed right well what they had done
With the last life-flame of the sun :
And while her eyes, with love-light streaming,
Hung where the rich red tint was gleaming,
Low through her lips streamed forth this pray'r—
" This night—this night, that I were there ! "

Her sister turned, as if to chide,
(For Sally loved our walks to share)—
But if there be a holy pride,
 Oh, sure am I, I saw it there
On Sally's brow—in Sally's glance.
Her snowy eyelids seemed to dance,
And say, the while she gazed and kiss'd her—
“ God ! is this beauteous thing *my* sister ? ”
I wept, and thought, while looking on—
There 's none to chide me so—No, none !

Before the twain I could have knelt,
 Such pure affection to adore ;
And yet, I think, I never felt
 So very, very sad before :
'Tis true, I long had felt and known
Myself to walk the world alone,
But then it struck me more exactly—
As white makes black look still more blackly—
For sorrow never strikes the eye
So plainly as when linked with joy.

And Sally said, “ Now, sister dear,
 We surely know each other well,
And when had I the haughty ear
 Whatever tale you had to tell.
But well I know by that sad prayer
Your soul would shield what I should share ;
Some inward snow-blight has been busy
Upon your own sweet cheek, my Lizzie,
This weary, weary month and more,
I never saw you so before.”

And Lizzie smiled ; but such a smile !—
 I never like to see that kind
That comes and lights the lips awhile—
 Then leaves a sickly shade behind ;
And while she gazed, as if afar,
A spot not much unlike a star,

Up, up her cheek slipped high, and higher,
Till, at the top, a spark of fire—
It flickered, brightened, sat, and shone
The richest tint you've ever known.

I could have liked to see the tint,
But all around it looked so pale,
It struck me there was something in't
Would one day tell a sorry tale.
And then, she said,—“ Now, Sally, dear,
Could I have aught and you not hear,
I know of nothing, do believe me,
'Tis not thy Lizzie would deceive thee ;
I know of nothing I could tell,
Unless, I think, I'm not so well ;

“ And ever since my wondrous dreams,
I have not felt the way I ought :
For, sister, childish as it seems,
I cannot b'lieve they came for nought ;
And were it not for leaving you,
I might be proud to see them true :
For woman, dear, this world of ours
Has many spots that grow no flowers,
And though it may have much to love,
There's surely, surely more above ! ”

I said I'd like to hear the dream,
For such, though faithless as the winds,
I ever looked on as the steam
Of busy, strong, poetic minds,
That worked young Fancy's puppet shows
When prosy Reason took repose ;
And Sally smiled, while Lizzie, saying,
“ If memory have not gone a-Maying ”—
So, guilelessly upon her knees,
Her snowy fingers tried to tease.

Her eyes she fixed first on her hands,
Then slowly raised them till they met
A cloud, with three small golden bands,
And all the rest a field of jet ;
And then, her fingers locked and raised,
Her dark eyes glistening as she gazed,
Her brow, 'twixt two black curl-clouds brightening—
As though they breath'd the soul's own lightning—
Glowed in the gorgeous spirit-storm,
Till every feature changed its form.

And then, she said, “ 'Twas such a sky,
And such an eve, I thought, as these,
And I had thrown my flowering by,
And leaned my brow against the breeze,
And on the brambly “ Rock of nests ”
I sat and watched the downy breasts
Of speckled clouds, that o'er me mingled,
Till one from 'mongst the rest I singled—
Through all the world, like that one there—
As black as sister Sally's hair.

Just such as you—as dark as night—
But crossed, as with a golden band,
And on the edge one spot of white,
I think, not larger than my hand ;
And while I gazed, a lightning-flash
Along the yellow belt did dash,
And then a fearful burst of thunder,
And there the cloud was clove asunder :
I looked again, 'twas out of sight,
All save that little spot of white.

And then I thought it grew so dark,
The heart within me leap'd with dread,
When all at once a clear bright spark
Appeared exactly o'er my head ;
And there the little patch of white
Came sailing to that point of light,

Which ever moved as if to guide it,
Still when the snow-spot came beside it ;
And wheresoe'er that star-thing led
It left behind a golden thread.

A long, bright, golden-thread-like track
Across the sky, methought, it drew,
And then some millions, white and black,
Dear little cloudlets, came in view :
And on they swam, and swam, and spread,
Like beads along that shining thread,
And still the thread was getting fuller,
And still the beads were changing colour—
The white to black, the black to white,
And some of these to flakes of light.

Again I saw the little cloud,
'Twas foremost, and had larger grown,
And would you b'lieve, I felt as proud
As if the thing had been my own ;
But on its bosom rose a speck
That seemed to deepen into black,
I could have wept—poor little rover—
I said, your journey's nearly over ;
For when they changed to *very* black,
They somehow left that shining track.

Now was it not a wondrous dream ?
There, when that dark spot did appear,
The little starry point did seem
To linger till the cloud came near ;
And then, as if, to breathe a light,
That made the blackness grow so bright,
You would have thought the thing was turning
From snow and jet to something burning,
And this was done from west to east,
I'm sure, a thousand times at least.

And onward, onward did they swim,
That drear, inverted bowl of sky,
Until they reached the misty rim
That shuts thereafter from your eye ;
When all at once streamed on my sight,
A little well of dazzling light,
Whose wave-like glories, gushing, gushing,
With many a rainbow beauty blushing,
Their glittering spray so brightly rained,
My sight—my soul within was pained.

And there the little spark of light,
That spun the long and golden thread,
At once shot out—both broad and bright—
Three yellow arms—or rather red ;
Three golden arms—or may be more—
I somehow think that there were four—
And o'er that little well it threw them,
And still I looked, and thought I knew them,
The very bands I first did see,
Or else, as like as like could be.

And on, and onward did they sweep,
These little cloudlets, till they came
And clustered, like a flock of sheep,
Hard by that well of silvery flame.
And there they rose, and spread, and spread,
Like glory round the Saviour's head
That father bought me, gay and gilded,
Until a beauteous cloud they builded—
A lovely cloud of yellow light,
And on the top, that patch of white.

And, oh ! to see how brightly shone
That little cloud, so wondrous fair,
For though the black from all had gone,
I thought it still the loveliest there :
And while I mused what it could be,
A flake, not larger than a pea,

And speckled like a "Peeweeet's" feather—
Perhaps not quite so darkly either—
Fell o'er its breast—swept from my sight
A wavelet, down that well of light.

I 'waked just then, and round my bed
A moment in confusion glanced,
And while, o'er sister Sally's head,
The yellow-footed sunbeam danced,
I fancied still I saw the well,
And that the light which round me fell
Was glistening like a golden shower,
Till for, I'm sure, a long, long hour,
I could not force myself to b'lieve
A dream could half so well deceive.

All day I swam it through my mind ;
But had each wavelet of that well
Been in my very heart confined,
My lips had wanted power to tell.
And yet the thoughts that hugged my brain
Had more of pleasure, far, than pain,
And round my heart that kind of motion,
Which tiptoe breezes bring the ocean,
A fluttering, anxious come-and-go,
That wished the best—the worst to know.

And eve arose, and stood between
The rosy sun and Causeway shores,
And though I love the tender green,
That shrouds those queenly sycamores—
So much, that never comes the night
That does not wave them on my sight—
That eve stood lone among the seven,
For I was less of earth than heaven,
And well—and clouds did round me creep
Till other scenes were wrung from sleep.

And then I walked the Causeway shore,
And traced, in spite of tide and time,
The names of many a stranger score
Who bowed before the gray sublime ;
And thought it strange why blood and bone
Should fix a speaking scratch in stone,
As though its owner's fancied glory
Could bluster through that two-word story—
And stranger still, that man should try
To live for every reckless eye.

And then, methought, I saw my name,
Creep o'er a pillar rent and gray,
And while I looked, a billow came
And kissed, and kissed it all away.
And then the green thing changed its tinge
To white, with yellow foamy fringe,
Which 'neath the rocks a moment lingers,
Till writhing round the whirlwind's fingers,
It soared, a broad cloud, snowy white,
And then away—a flash of light !

• • • • •





Lachrymatoire.

GIVE me, O, Potent Art, creative mind—

Some weird conception—magic leaf or scroll—
Whereon, when pensive, I, embalmed, may find
• The shadows that have flitted o'er my soul,
Leaving no record—or, a little, or the whole !

Shadows, I mean, of cypresses and tombs—

Such various shades as varying sorrow wears ;
From lighter-tinged regrets to darker glooms ;
From griefs, as when some fond face disappears,
To agonies, that eat too deep for words or tears !





The following remarks, in the author's handwriting, have, from shortly after the child's death, appeared *under* a copy of the versicles headed Vickie D—, which were printed on an embossed card, and framed about the time of their being written :

VICKIE D—.

The following lines were written at the playful request of Vickie D— herself, some couple of years before her death, and when we had no dream of illness in connection with her health, much less of her death ; and, as will be seen, they are, all through, in the past tense, as if the GOOD SHEPHERD had called His lamb long before they were written.

Have we, therefore, a *pre-vision*, whereof we are unconscious ? Do we utter prophetic rhapsodies without knowing them to be prophetic ? Alas ! who is so wise that he may lawfully fix a limit to the relationship and intimacy that may exist between the everlasting spirit—even while in the flesh—and the Intelligences of the world eternal ?

A FAIRY sweetheart once had I—
Sweet, heart and soul was she ;
In native gold, her *all* was told—
Her name was Vickie D—.
A cottage pride, she hid beside
The city's swink and din,
And dreamt, no doubt, of things without,
But never of their sin.
O, dreaming Vickie D— !
O, guileless Vickie D— !
 The dewy flower
 'S a 'wilderling power,
And so was Vickie D— !

She might have freshly dropt from heaven,
My heart's queen looked so fair :
Its blue in June—its harvest moon
Flashed from her eyes and hair !

And surely God, o'er sea or sod,
A glory never threw
So purely bright, in red and white,
As, darling, shone on you.
O Vickie—Vickie D—!
Heart-breaking Vickie D—!
The light of heaven
To love was given,
And so was Vickie D—!

The summer breeze is soft and sweet—
Is swift, they say, as well :
But from her feet, so wild and fleet,
The songs of spirits fell !
Let minstrel thought be all it ought—
Bright, bounding, sweet, and free,
And, ah ! I know of nought below,
So near akin to thee !
O, gleeful Vickie D—!
O, dear, dear Vickie D—!
Yon breeze is rare—
Yon thought is—*where* ?
Then give me Vickie D—!

For, ah, her love !—such love for *me* !—
Ay, ere she knew my name,
Like odours born of flowery thorn,
O'er all my heaven it came !
So, loved she not for this or that,
Might show me weak or strong,
But, just, she loved *because* she LOVED,
And could not think it wrong !
O, Vickie—Vickie D—!
Wee darling Vickie D—!
God *only* knows
How loving grows—
How dear you grew to me !

THE LOAN RECLAIMED.

Though it is at least possible that *one day or another* this little volume of odds and ends in verse may meet the public eye, there is at present no *certainty*, nor anything approaching thereto, of such *ever* being the case. Therefore, the writer would say that it is not from anything of either hope or desire to gratify a *public taste*, but, simply, with a view to the solacing of his own feelings, or those of the few related by blood or sympathy, that the different snatches of song, on a subject very dear to him, and following here, in consecutive order, as originally written, have been thus caught together from fugitive slips, or frequently, very illegible MS.

But, even should it so turn out, that this little volume of MS. verse be one day made public, it is the writer's impression that, as the visitations of an impartial Providence, however grievous, are neither the peculiar lot nor the established inheritance of any particular individual or individuals of God's family, so there may be some—might we not say *many*?—who, under similar circumstances, and in the bosom of their own grief, would be able to find not only an apology for the *public appearance* of such verses, but something akin to gratification from a perusal of the like.

Let us hope so.

It may also be stated here, that VICKIE D— is an *abbreviation* of the name Alexandrina Victoria Davis, which abbreviation had been playfully adopted by the child herself. She died on the 23rd of November, 1869, at the age of six years, eleven months, and eight days. At home and abroad she was a *general favourite*. With an acute ear for music, a bold clear voice, and *wondrous* amount of *feeling*, she, above all her little companions, and above many much older, was *remarkable* for *intellect* as well as for vivacity. Her sufferings were brief. She appeared in her usual health, talking of her school, and preparing for it on Saturday evening, and was at HOME with our God about mid-day on the Tuesday following. She suffered much, but patiently. About an hour before her departure, lying with her eyes closed, she called twice upon a little companion sister—in a dreamy sort of undertone—"Lizzie! Lizzie!" and, half-an-hour after whispered mournfully, with an uneasy motion of the head, "I'm sleepy—I'm sleepy!"

Oh grant, sweet Heaven, that we also may sleep in Jesus, even as we know assuredly that it is in HIM "she sleeps!"

THE Shepherd Jesus one day lent
A beauteous lamb to me ;
We loved it for the Lender's sake,
And called it Vickie D.—.
But when one drear November came
Across the frosty wold,
The Shepherd Jesus took His lamb
To shield it from the cold—
The Holy Shepherd took His lamb,
To His most heavenly fold.

I loved—oh, how I loved that lamb,
 It grew so wond'rous fair !
 The soft blue eyes—their thousand wiles—
 The links of golden hair—
 The little lisping spouts of song
 Up through its laughter thrown—
 For these, and more, too well I loved,
 The thing was not my own !
 O, Shepherd Jesus, let my tears
 For that sad love atone !

Ah, silly sheep ! Why bleat, and bleat,
 For any lamb away,
 When scarcely seemed, o'er all the moor,
 Her pasture for a day ?
 I weep because my heart is weak,
 And worn as heart can be—
 I weep because that bright-fleeced thing
 Was half the world to me !
 I weep—I weep, *because* I weep—
 O, Vickie—Vickie D— !

I know—I know, a silly sheep,
 Both blind and lame am I—
 For ever groping for the stream,
 Till all the brook is dry ;
 I know—I know that cold and bare
 Were all her vales below ;
 And where to lead my lamb to feed
 I saw not for the snow ;
 O, Shepherd Jesus, tend my lamb,
 I'll follow soon, I know !

" SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME."

AH suffer them, Saviour ! How could we say ' Nay ! '
 They are Thine when most visibly ours ;
 Then, wherefore our tears, when Thou takest them away,
 'Tis a blessing too deep, when for even a day,
 Thou lendest to odour these temples of clay—
 The breath of those heavenly flowers !

By the River of Life we shall clasp them again,
 In their beauty and youth as they shine ;
 But Saviour—sweet Saviour ! o'er those who remain
 In the thraldom of flesh, Thou, Thy wrath wilt restrain—
 In the thraldom of flesh—all alone with their pain,
 If they *weep* while pronouncing them Thine !

SHE SLEEPS.

SHE sleeps ! She sleeps ! Around her bed
 The holy mountain odours meet,
 One tiny tree weeps o'er her head,
 Another bends above her feet ;
 She sleeps between the cypresses,
 And will not—*may* not wake for me !
 Oh, long and deep,
 And cold's your sleep
 Wee, gleeful, darling Vickie D— !
 She sleeps ! She sleeps !
 I cannot see her where she sleeps !

She sleeps ! She sleeps ! Her coverlets
 With diamond braid from heaven are bright ;
 The red sun gilds them while he sets ;
 The white moon sheets them through the night !
 And up her curtains blue, each morn,
 The wild lark showers his wildest glee,
 But cannot break
 The rest you take,
 Heart-breaking sleeper, Vickie D— !
 She sleeps ! She sleeps !
 And, ah, so long my darling sleeps !

She sleeps ! She sleeps ! Beneath her breast
 Are laid, in fold, her little hands ;
 Her temples in their tresses rest—
 A mid-day moon in golden bands !
 I know—I know she sleepeth so,

Though noon or night, I ne'er may see,
So close they've laid
Yon green brocade,
That wraps wee darling Vickie D—!
She sleeps ! She sleeps !
My bird of song—my beauty sleeps !

She sleeps ! But still her morning laugh,
As ever, greets my waking ear ;
She sleeps ! But still, as day pales off,
Her full-voiced "Evening hymn" I hear !
And through the pictured halls of sleep,
Her "Tender Shepherd" suff'reth me
Again to walk,
To toy and talk,
With His sweet angel, Vickie D— !
She sleeps ! She sleeps !
O, Father, soothe me, while she sleeps !

She sleeps ! But God, our Father, knows
To hide my darling close from me,
Might bring my heart but wild repose—
'Twould break !—'Twould break, for Vickie D— !
Oh, hence, illumed in all her wealth
Of smiles and wiles, He lendeth me
My fairy love—
My blue-eyed dove—
Wee tripping, gleeful Vickie D— !
She sleeps ! She sleeps !
But *dreamless*, ah, my beauty sleeps !

She sleeps ! She sleeps ! She dreameth not
On yon low couch ! Ah, no ! ah, no !
But mine hath been a dreamer's lot—
O, Thou, my God, who shaped it so—
Who giv'st such *soothing* dreams in sleep—
In *sleep*, oh, grant them still to me ;
But, hence, ah, take,
For Jesu's sake,
These *waking* dreams of Vickie D— !

She sleeps ! She sleeps !
But I'm a *maddening* while she sleeps !

She sleeps ! She sleeps ! Oh, mine's a woe—
A grief that *bleeds*—no poet's pain,
Though oft crazed Fancy *thinks* it so,
While trips my jewel in her train,
Till through the glory of her face,
Behold there starts yon cypress tree !
In Jesu's breast,
I hide the rest—
I go to Him and Vickie D— !
She sleeps ! She sleeps !
One parting less because she sleeps !

She sleeps ! She sleeps ! O, Fount of Light !
O, Fount of Love—of Justice, too !
If thus I weep along *my night*,
So wounded, what can *weakness* do ?
I know—I know she was *too fair*—
Too sweet—too *heavenly* far, for me,
But, while I own
She's Thine alone,
I *can't forget* she's VICKIE D— !
She sleeps ! She sleeps !
I bow to Thee, in whom she sleeps !

A LITTLE AND TRUE BALLAD,

FOR LITTLE MAIDS AT SCHOOL.

Air—"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me." *

In a dainty cottage bower,
Willow-curtained, up Malone,
Lately bloomed as sweet a flower
As the Lord hath made His own !

* The above air, as well as the little hymn itself, was a favourite with deceased.

Gleesome—guileless—lamb-like, gentle,
Daily, as to school tript she,
Folded in her little mantle,
Few we met like Vickie D—!

White as snow before it freezes
Was this little maiden's soul ;
Much she loved to sing of Jesus—
Much she loved her teacher, Boal.

Each wee maiden 'round him knoweth,
In her class how apt was she ;
Every one who thither goeth
Might remember Vickie D— !

Sooth, she was a tiny maiden,
Very young and very fair—
Soft blue eyes, and forehead laden
With a wealth of golden hair ;

Features cast in mould the rarest —
Much what marble cherubs be !
“ 'Tis an *angel's* look thou wearest ! ”
Many said to Vickie D— !

Saturday, we saw her writing
Gravely by Papa's arm-chair,
Queer, wee 'wilder'd words uniting—
All day long, she nestled there !

Blither chirpt that eve her laughter—
Sweeter seemed her hymns to be ;
But, behold ! the *third* day after,
Cold and *white* lay Vickie D— !

Ah, her “ Tender Shepherd ” loved her !
Hence, from drear November's cold,
Kindly, swiftly, He removed her
To His high and holy fold !

Little maids, when Heaven pleases,
 We must leave the world, as she !
 Oh, then learn the way to Jesus,
 There to sing with Vickie D— !

OUR FATHER'S FLOWER.

'TWAS a sweet, sweet flower from our Father's wold,
 With a silver stem and blossom of gold,
 And the hill-pinks passed seven times to rest,
 Ere that bright thing paled on my own warm breast !
 Far, far from the upper mould !
 Down, down where the clay lies cold,
 In a dark, dark hour,
 Have they laid my flower
 Of the silver stem and blossom of gold !

But my flower shall wake, though it sleeps so still,
 And its leaf wax warm, though it now lies chill !
 For our Father's voice, when it cleaves the air,
 Shall a music make—even down, down there !
 Far, far from the upper mould—
 Down, down where the clay lies cold !
 And in that bright hour
 Shall arise my flower
 Of the silver stem and blossom of gold !

BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT.

BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT, though gone, and for ever,
 Sure, though in glory, you think on me still—
 Here where my life ebbeth out, like a river,
 Flowing the fleeter from flowing down hill !
 Come to me, blessed one ! come in my slumbers !
 Come in the beauty that bloometh on high !
 Come, with thy lips streaming forth the sweet numbers,
 Breathed to our Saviour, when mortal as I !

Come, and be near me !—be watching—be waiting,
When cometh the summons for me to appear,
Where all shall be love without dread of abating—
The love in its glory that casteth out fear !

Oh, I'll rejoice when our Maker it pleases
To call me, and place me, wee darling, with thee !
Ah, thou'rt so happy there, looking on Jesus !
Happier, jewel, than ever with me !

A LITTLE FLASH OF LIGHT.

A LITTLE flash of light,
Too beautiful to stay,
It shone along my night,
And, shining, passed away !

I loved it—oh, I loved—
Beyond my words to tell !
But dreamt not, till removed,
I loved it half so well !

O Thou, whose Self is Light—
Who gave and took my gleam !
I know that in Thy sight
'Tis still a *living* beam !

I know that golden ray,
I cannot now look on,
Shall kiss these tears away,
When all this night is gone !

THE WHEREFORE.

LIKE to the Prophet's gourd, of old,
Her beauties spread full soon,
To yield us dreams of holier beams,
Though withering ere the noon !

To teach our hearts the nothingness
Of all that's bright below !
To waft our minds far o'er the winds
That here, distracting, blow—
That suffering soul may know,
Of what—of whom, God's gardens bloom,
For pilgrims when they go,
By grace refined, amongst their kind,
To meet, as snow with snow,
Yet holding warmth, and light and love,
That could not live below !
That wane, ah, never beyond that river,
Where suns no shadows throw—
Where gourds celestial grow !

A DEATH-BED DREAM.

Oh, such a dream !—I've just awoke !
I wore a dazzling new white gown,
And watched the waves, *as white*, that broke
Against yon rock, whose sea-pink crown
The clustering moss so overspreads—
'Tis like a mattress stuffed with down !
Ah, often, in their flush from town
Right grand ones there have laid their heads,
And called our rock "The Feather-beds!"
O dear, dear rock—white strand and shore—
O early home ! O blessed dream !
That gave me so to walk, once more,
Away from city smoke and steam !
And yet I know my dream's but vain :
That blessed day shall never beam,
May light me over BUSHFOOT stream !
O Leassan braes ! Ah, dreaming brain,
I'll never see BUSHFOOT again !
There, straight and slim, up BUSHFOOT lawn,
Did dear old Auntie Matty stand,
And watch the kye, with Uncle John—
A sun-shade making of her hand ;

And Cousin Tom, he, too, was there ;
And Bella, down along the strand,
Where George some dainty play had plann'd,
 And from the sea that blessed air
 Rang wild with music, everywhere !

O spot, so blest !—O happy souls,
 Who have such visions all the year !
Your bathing-pools, like marble bowls,
 Hewn in the rock, and crystal clear !
 Ah, what I'd give for but *one day*
To sit and see them !—e'en to *hear*
The shout of waves to me so dear !
 To see them round the black rocks play,
 And cloak them with their creamy spray !

And here and there, adown the hill,
 Betwixt our auntie's and the sea,
The dear wee rabbits romped their fill—
 The whole just as it used to be—

 The *sandy hills* that hem the strand
Had bent would strike ye o'er the knee ;
But, lovelier still, and nearer me,
 The shining sea-birds flocked the sand
 That sparkled whiter than your hand !

Ah, weary me ! I thought to win
 Another wander round that shore !
May God forgive me for the sin
 Of weeping till my heart was sore,
 As bright and brighter beamed the days,
And every sun but witness bore,
 That dear, dear spot *I'd* see no more !
 But God is kind in all His ways,
 Though my poor head I'll never raise !

'Twill soon be—*by* ! Ah, darlings, don't
 For *my* sick fancies weep ye so !
Ye never grieved—nor now ye won't—
 The heart they'll soon be laying low !

Alas—anee ! my silly eyes !
I thought no tears were left to flow—
I thought I'd drained them *long ago*—
And yet a *dream* the drain supplies—
Ah, when did dreaming make us wise !

But, now, wee darlings !—let me rest—
I'll weep no more for Leassan brae !
The yellow shamrocks o'er its breast,
If 'mongst them, dears, some after day,
Ye think on “Mother,” don't with *tears* !

For I'll be brighter than the *MAY*,
Though, *now*, to feel so far away
From all *so loved* in early years,
Brings down the night before it nears !

ONLY A FLOWER.

'Tis but a flower—a withered thing—
A faded fragment of the Spring ;
I love it—not for scent or hue—
But for the spot whereon it grew !

'Tis but a flower, and nowise rare—
A trifle nursed in mountain air,
That hath, though silent all it be,
A long, long tale of love for me !

It wings my soul along the past,
Where light was far too bright to last ;
It leads me swift through laughing years ;
But, ah, to end the flight with tears !

Oh, cold's the spot—both cold and lone—
Where this my faded flower was grown ;
But, ah, though lone—though chill that air—
I muse with angels, musing there !

O, simple flower ! O, faded leaf !
Though still your tale must end in grief,
I would not change the tears you bring,
For all the holiest smiles of Spring !

'Tis sweet—aye, *sweet!*—while others sleep,
 To gaze upon thee till I weep ;
 Or through my slumbers watch thee wave,
 As once o'er "Gray-eyed Sally's" grave !

R A P - T A P .

" 'Tis God-like to acknowledge good,
 And to desire its being acknowledged ——"

See Voices Among the Tombs.

The words "Rap-Tap," as well as these introductory lines, would, perhaps, for the general reader, be the better of a brief explanation. Alexander Crawford, Esq., T.C., of Chlorine House, Belfast, gave the writer for several years a handsome cottage and flower garden *free of rent*. To this cottage it was his habit for years to come every evening, and to knock, not with the metallic wrapper, but, more familiarly, with his knuckles, with a sort of *rythmical* knock, or number of knocks, known at once to be his. It was not to converse on literary matters that he was thus in the habit of visiting the writer. Mr. Crawford cared but little for poetry; but he loved to talk of heaven, and of things pertaining thereto; and in such conversations his visit of half an hour was almost always employed. Sorrow visited the cottage—sickness and death; and when in the burial ground where a grave had been promised to be ready, by another friend who *loved poetry*, it was found that *no* grave had been ordered, only such as is permitted to the desolate and outcast. Here Mr. Crawford, who was present, by virtue of his authority as a T.C., ordered a couple of graves on the spot, and not only *ordered*, but *paid for them*.

A wayward child of useless powers,
 Begot of sun and shade was I,
 My lot it was to look for flowers,
 And strew them for each passer-by ;
 And some there were who loved the gifts—
 Or *said* they loved them—passing well ;
 And some there were who love them not,
 Or, if they loved, they did not tell.

But lo ! this lot of sun and shade
 Became all shadow—yea, all gloom,
 And even the flower-gifts I had made
 Seemed, somehow, reft of all perfume :
 Then spake the voice of one, had given—
 Without his worship of my flowers—
 A house to dwell in—"Friend," he said,
 "There's nothing here that's strictly ours :

The Lord we love has aided me—
A house to dwell in lent I thee ;
I care—not I, for all thy flowers—
I care not for thy *wasted* powers ;
I lent a house wherein to dwell—
Now, for thy *dust* a home as well !”

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
From the old familiar knuckle
Comes the old familiar rap—
Half in play,
As if to say,
With a semi-serious chuckle,
How are all good folks to-day ?

Ah, that “ Rap-tap ! ”
Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
Striking on my memory’s ear,
How it moisteneth my eyes ;
For it seemeth, sounding here,
As if sounding from the skies !
Ah, on memory’s ear alone,
For the hand that rapt is gone—
Never more
On yon, my door,
To awake a smile within,
As in eves, like this, of yore,
In the eyes of young and old,
Mid the “ prittle-prattle ” din
Of each lamb within my fold.
But, to wake—wake, evermore—
Thoughts that crush me to the core,
Each to such as *kill* a-kin—
Slumberous hosts
Of tearful ghosts—
Ghosts of blisses that have been —
Of the happy days I’ve seen !

Memories in this heart of flame,
 Couched as deep,
 As is your sleep,
Ye, whom memory bleeds to name,
 Visitor and visited !—
 Yea, for whom these tears are shed,
 O'er that cruelly-quiet bed,
Which, 'twere bleeding grief to name !

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
 On the door of yonder cot,
 Still, it *seemeth*—still, is *not* !
While a hand—a shadow thin,
 Doth arise
 Upon my eyes,
Taking him who rappeth in !
Oh, that joyous, welcome din,
 I shall hear it nevermore—
 Never—never—nevermore !

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
 Say, O sound, whence comest thou ?
 Who shall tell me whence or how,
Since no more yon playful rap
 Shall be hearkened but as now ?
 Say, O wondrous visitant,
What thou art, to ring so clear
On my Recollection's ear !
Phantom *forms* that Fancy brings,
 Have or *had* substantial base ;
 Thou hast neither form nor face !
Phantom *sounds* !—mysterious things—
 Who your being, strange, may *trace*—
 Who your secret dwelling place ?
From the womb of hoary space,
Struck by motion's rushing wings,
 Smitten air
 Your bodies were—
Rap and tap were baseless things :

Sounds we *hear*, but may not see—
Have the *spirits*, though, as we ?
 Rap and Tap are dead and gone ;
 With my Grief I talk alone ;
If no *spirit-sounds* there be,
What are these so visit me ?

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
Recollement, what art thou ?
Breathe the wondrous where and how,
 Thou secretest forms and faces—
 Even *sounds* whose mystic paces
 Leave the learned'st eye no traces,
Till thou call'st them forth as now,
 With a tremor—with a sigh—
Till we hear or see, as now—
 Hot of heart and moist of eye !
Ah, when sorrows, clustering round,
 Under thine imperial sway,
Lamp with tears the dark profound
Of thine, always, holier ground ;
 Yea, till anguish makes it day
Round the blisses slain or bound—
 Is it in thy zeal to *slay*,
 Leagued with sorrows, thou and they
Shape these shadows, shaped to wound—
 Nurse amid that subtler air,
 From some hoarded radiance there—
 Nurse till *vocal*, as it were,
Even the shadow of a sound ?

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
 Hark ! It rings on Memory's ear—
Ah, that dear familiar rap,
 Other hearing doth not hear !
 Visitor, and visited,
Where art thou, and where are they ?
 'Ask the places of the dead ! '

Even silence seems to say !
Side by side, almost, to-day,
Three there sleep in silent clay !
 Oh, the breath of Ruin's reign !
Beauty meaneth but decay ;
 Death, the Spectre's finger-stain,
Looms through Beauty's richest ray !
 Love, himself's a phantom vain,
 High in heart and low in brain,
Leading Hope a thorny way—
Leading Reason's self astray—
 “ Vagrant Whim his aptest mate,”
Say the prematurely gray—
 Say the hearts left desolate !
Nothing loved can Love retain—
 Nothing build that may remain !
Home of love, what sayest thou ?
Cometh thence no answer now !
 Vacant space but seems to say :
“ Meekly to the silence bow—
 We are here—the home's away !
All that made it *Home*'s away—
 Wrapt in darkness and the clay !”
Oh, that cruel—cruel clay !

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
All is gone—remain behind,
With one sighing sycamore—
Once it *smiled* upon my door !
Making music on the wind—
Music I'm but woe to hear !
But yon sounds on Memory's ear,
And these pictures in my mind :

Fancy shrubs, in *ones* and *twos*—
Flowering lilacs—solemn yews—
Those, like maids of lighter views,
Wear their charms as worn to lose ;

These, like students of our creeds,
Calmly cloaked in sable weeds—
Though they wear their *coral* beads !—
Lines of box that need repair,
Flowers flashing here and there—
More of such than Order needs,
More than Horticulture *heeds* ;
Happy faces, young and fair—
One, with all an angel's air !
Eyes that up, like Summer shine,
Though their spring they scarcely wear ;
Hands that nursed my Sycamore,
With a more than mother's care !
Golden eyes and silver morns,
Roses *with* and *wanting* thorns—
Light and shade exchanging places,
Now and then, on loving faces—
Shade, at times, appearing stronger,
Still, the light remaining longer !
Berry bushes—fruitage green ;
Stretching from the summer-seat,
Cautions little fingers seen
Prickly branches thrust between—
Seeking some forbidden sweet ;
Then, a storm of tiny feet,
With a rollick-romping beat,
Past the laurels—down the path—
Oh, the rosy nooks it hath !
Oh, how gleeful that retreat
From a mother's fancied wrath !
Then a mother's quiet face,
Calm and beauteous as the moon,
Fills the green vacated place,
Like the dream we lose too soon—
Like a dream of softest light
Seen in visions of the night,
Or in fancies of the noon—
Seen away on distant hills,
While the tink of far-off rills,

Like some dear old Irish tune,
Richly mellow—sweetly clear—
Seems her voice upon the ear—
“ Berries are not safe so soon !”

Like the evening's golden light,
Dashed with flakes of darkest stain,
Fades that vision from my sight—
Would, it ne'er might rise again !
Or, if rising, bring, amain,
Something solemn as the night,
O'er these tablets in my brain,
Rather than, as *now*, should rise,
Such as follow in its train—
Pictures of a wilder guise—
Blurred with deathly agonies :
Beauty stretched—an icy mass—
Cold white lips and weeping eyes,
Frantic gait, and smothered cries—
Maddening pictures—let them pass !
All things take *their* tint, alas !
What is life, but sun and sighs—
What 's the fairest flesh but grass ?

What is beauty—what is love ?
Are they *here*, or but *above* ?
Flowers, they tell me, still are fair !
Be it so !
For *me*, I know,
Beauty lives not anywhere ;
Nor in canvas, wood, or stone,
Nor in flowers, the fairest grown,
Nor in mountain, shore, or sea ;
All's a blank—I walk alone !
All the beauty used to be
In the forest, lake, and lea,
In God's glorious canopy—
All I loved to ecstasy !

If I ever thought it fair—
Felt a beauty, here or there,
'Twas a *dream*, and it hath flown !
Ah, this truth is little known :
 Little here
 Was ever dear,
For the light *it* may have shown—
For *its sely's* sake, or one's own !
 All its charm
 Of tint or form,
Found its force in this alone :
 Some one near,
 We *might not* hear,
Mingling strangely with our being,
Shared with us the joy of seeing !

Rap-tap ! Rap-a, tip-a, tap !
 Ever near,
 And sharp and clear,
Steal the sounds upon my ear !
Whence they come, let others say—
Let them come and go, or stay,
 All I truly loved 's away !
All is gone—remains behind
 But my nursling sycamore,
Shaping sighs from every wind—
 Straining blindly for the door
That it nevermore shall find—
 Never—never—nevermore !

Say ye, “ Grief, like Love, is blind ?
 Sights as lovely may appear,
 Through the watches of the year,
 For the eyes that revel here ! ”

 Be it so !

Beauty come or beauty go—
I can only feel and know
 That, for me, remain behind
But yon rap-tap on my ear,
 And those PICTURES in my mind !

Where it Must be.

WHENEVER—however—*wherever*—it be,
 Whether I die on the land or sea,
 There's a dear, dear spot on a grassy lea—
 And it's there—oh, there ! wont they bury me !

Untrodden—scarce known, and almost alone,
 Or, apart from the numerous companie,
 As life, amid life, has been with me !—

It lieth not flat,
 All the fairer for that,

On the edge of that loneliest cemeterie—
 On the skirts of that slumbering companie—
 'Tis a nook on a green declivite,
 Where *one* I once knew,
 With something *not* dew,
 Oft sprinkled the daisies that over it grew ;
 From the day's full beam till the eve's decline—
 Ah, the ashes are there that shall welcome mine :
 Yea, the ashes of twain—my moon and my star—
 And I'm longing to rest, as the twain, where they are.

Oh, I'll sleep so sound
 On that rising ground,
 With nothing to wake me—nothing to wound—
 With nothing to fear,
 Nothing to hear—

With the flowers above, and the dews around,
 And the glory of God in the blue profound ;
 Oh, sweetly I'll sleep on that rising ground.
 In that nook on yon green declivite,
 'Tis so pleasant to know my grave shall be—
 'Tis the tiniest hill you could almost see,
 And the winds sing over it lonelilie ;
 And the lone wind's sigh,
 And that hill, *not* high,

Do my own tale tell, half mournfullie—

For the life I've known

Was hilly and lone—

A lonely and up-hill way to me :

But I know I shall never

On its cold top shiver,

With the bluff years, there,

Breathing snows in my hair :

For never at life's hill-top I'll be ;

But just where the steep

Beginneth, I'll sleep,

With faith in a *fancy* no fact could control,

That the *Autumn* of flesh is the *Spring* of the soul !—

Thus, in solace and hope,

From my life's hill-slope,

I'll be borne to rest on the grassy lea—

To my sleep on that green declivitie,

To the quiet nook,

Where they yet shall look

Through tears who have none to-day for me ;

For over my bed

Shall tears be shed

By some who, to-day, mightn't grieve were I dead,

Believing all evil that *evils* have said ;

For, though love of the right and hate of the wrong

Was the way of my walk and the shape of my song,

Yet, Envy's so subtle of saying and smile,

That poor Human Nature half loveth her guile.

Alas, for Humanity ! Truly, we've seen

That its faults and its follies too many have been—

Ah, the bulk of Spring leaves, in their season, are green !

And they fade, and they fall in the calm Autumn eves,

When we joy in the fruit often hid in the leaves !—

In the *leaves*?—Wherefore not ? Ah, my hopes would be
low

In the promise of fruit, where the leaf could not grow !

Be the day long or brief,

Of this *profitless* leaf,

Let us wait, not despairing of God's *when* or *how* :

For it yet may be seen

That these *trifles* of green,

So like young vigour wasted in certain eyes now,

Shall have uses revealed,

In the office of yield,

When purple and gold gather form on the bough.

For me, it may be,

That my way, as some see it, or say that they see,
Over much like my song, hath been errant and wild ;

And yet, I would say,

I have been in my day,

By fancy of others—

My sisters and brothers,

As oft as I've been by my follies, defied—

A man when a boy, and *to-day* but a child,

As easily cozened, betrayed, or beguiled,

With as flawless a faith in each traitor who smiled.

But Death, when he comes,

A-totting up sums,

Maketh quiet reveal

What our tumults conceal ;

And Charity listens and hopes and fears,

And lovingly weigheth the totals she hears—

Perceiving the false—how often with tears ;

Hence, I know them who'll know, and *say* it, *ashamed*,

That *lives of love* have been some they have blamed.

Still, is it not sad

Even *one* can be had

To say of his soul, he feels she'd be glad

To leave all the beauties

Of Time and its duties—

The beautiful world, as if *being* were bad ?

And yet, were it other—

Each foe like a brother,

Where life's such a battle, and one so unfit,
To jostle or joust, or do battle with it, ·

Ah, what can he say,

But he's worn with the way—

Yea, he's ready to rest would the Maker permit ?

Let it all pass !—

When I'm under the grass,

To me will be equal the gold and the brass—

The world, with its beauty, its "Hoot!" and "Alas!"

In value—eh, dear !—

So different *here*,

Where often—so *mournfully* often, I fear,

A plain honest name can be purchased too dear !

Well—let it all pass !—

Equal "Hoot!" and "Alas!"—

And yet, I know well,

If spirits could tell

Of thoughts o'er our ashes when under the grass,

My spirit would be,

With some sympathy,

Or measure of justice bestowed over me,

Delighted to tears where no tears there shall be !





LEAVES WITH LENGTHENED LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

	PAGE		PAGE
Minnie Blair : A Pastoral	9	The Tablet of Shadows :	274
Ireland : Voices Through her Sleep—An Apology	96	A Phantasy	277
		The Light Across the Cloud :	385
		Sin and Suffering	385

LEAVES FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE :

UNDER THE SMOKE AND OVER THE DEW.

	PAGE		PAGE
The County Down	121	The Sea	174
Turn your Money	122	I'll Never Take Him Now	175
Willie's Mother	124	A Blessing	176
Sweetheart o' my Cow	126	My Kallagh Dhu Asthore	183
Love and Money	127	My Ulick	184
My Curly Head	128	Bryan Ban	187
The Wrong Step	131	Clough Dhuine-Aughy	189
Dirty Water and Clean	133	Irish Frieze	194
Never Jock without a Jennie	135	The Minstrel of Mallow	195
Biddie's Notions	137	Song of Dearbhorgil	200
Kitty's Neighbours	139	Song of an Old Soldier	201
Says I and Says He	141	Queen of the Lagan	212
Better and Strong	143	The Round Twelvemonth	213
The Flower o' the Well	145	Peggy	214
The Last Letter	147	My Willie	215
Portballintrae	148	The Land of Love	216
My Jamie's Wakeness	151	Murdoch	218
My Black-North Girl	152	Love in the Country	252
A Chimney Chant	153	Bridge of the Bush	253
Caste and Creed	155	Seaview	254
C. D. P.	158	The Fairy Mirror	255
The North is Up	162	The Bride of the Water	258
The Dublin Exhibition of 1853	164	Low and Clean	270
Sweet Counsellings	170	The Crane's Bill	273
Kenban	173	Dream of a Wanderer	274
		Devis Mountain-side	276

LEAVES FROM FIELD AND FORUM:

SHED IN THE STORMS.

	PAGE		PAGE
Ireland's Warning	119	Our Own Land	225
True Blue	160	My Mountain Maid	226
The Burning	161	Wild Harp of Ierne	227
The Lady Slave	166	The Phantom Sword	229
Kathleen Ban Adair	180	The Voice of the Nation	231
Dan MacFee	186	Brighter Hopes	232
One of the Two	193	Thoughts for the Present	234
Eighty-Two	197	A Song for True Men	235
The Magic of Erin	199	My Betrothed	237
The Young Bride of Freedom	202	Young Erin's Creed	238
To the Memory of a Man	203	On Again	239
Faith	207	We've Pondered	240
Charity	209	Four on the Stem	242
Progress	210	The Tyrant Wooer	243
A Song of Sadness	217	To a "Tipperary Man"	244
The Felon	219	Remember the 30th May	246
A Chant of the '82 Club	220	A Song of Ulster	247
My Southern Brother	221	An Address	250
The Lovely Forsaken	223		

LEAVES FROM SACRED SCENES:

OR, SONGS OF THE DESERT.

	PAGE		PAGE
The Dawn	343	Now	370
The Wonderful One	345	The Saving Faith	372
Egypt	348	Love's Promises	373
Canaan	350	"Man of Sorrows"	375
The Love that Loveth Best	351	A Short Appeal	376
Benedictions	352	My Father Still	377
The Christian Exodus	354	St. Mary's Hall	378
Beauty and Love	355	The Merits of Prayer	379
The Call that Bringeth	356	The Ten Virgins	380
The Glory of the Church	359	Content	382
Canticles—Chap. I., v. 1-7	365	Healing Waters — Isaiah, Chap. XII..	382
"Thou Art the Man"—2nd Kings, Chap. XII., v. 7 .	367		

LEAVES OF MANY TINTS:

CAUGHT AS THEY CAME.

	PAGE		PAGE
How	399	The Weird Mantle	491
The Summer of Soul	402	The Peasant Prince of Song	493
A Death-Bed Dream	407	Go Sleep	495
May and Ever-May	409	Loneliness	495
A Few Years Ago	411	The Bridge in the Glen	496
I Cannot Sing	413	Despondency	497
March	415	Departed	498
Too Well	415	Far Away, H—. H—.	499
My Mary	418	The Outcast	502
Soul of the Beautiful	419	Friendship	502
A Visit of the Beautiful	420	Twilight Thoughts, No. 1	503
Beauty and Truth	421	Do. do. No. 2	504
Amaranths	423	To Lady F—.	506
Recreant May	425	Poesy	508
Only a Weed	429	The Hind of the Forest	510
<i>In Memoriam</i> —R. R.	433	Cinderella	511
Mother Earth	436	The Fisherman's Song	511
A Vision of the Dragon	439	Flowers	513
Inauguration Ode	448	Morn and Noon	514
Through the May Flowers	449	An Evening Song	517
Visions	450	A Lay of Autumn	518
All Wears Away	451	The Brother's Grave	520
The Pilgrims of Morning	453	The Mother's Violet	522
Life and Death	454	The Confession	524
The Minstrel's Rose	456	Delusion	529
Only a Fancy	458	Fire	530
De Fictus	461	Constancy	531
Recollections of Sacred Scenes	464	My Friend	532
Work	468	Hope	534
Saint Anser	472	Lines on the Blank Leaves of a Book	536
Little Silkie Down	479	A Mother's Lament	538
A Septuagenarian to His Wife	482	Have ye Seen	540
Sun and Shade	483	The Cottage on the Heath	541
Autumn Fruit	483	The Last Wish	544
Jane	485	Weaver's Song	545
The Singing Bird	486	Nanny	547
The Test	487	Dream of a Wanderer	548
Gentleness	488	The Re-United	549
Song of the Flood	488	The Maniac	550
Clink, O Clink	489	A Request	552
		The Fairy Serenade	554

	PAGE		PAGE
Sally of Aughnagearuch	555	Mary	593
Annie	556	A Winter Chant	594
Faithless Harry	557	Watch Papers	596
To Norah	558	Impromptu	596
An American War-Chant	559	Gray-Eyed Sally	596
My Molly	561	The Sisters	597
My Emma	561		
Raven-Haired Mary	563		
The Heart-stricken	563		
The Outward-bound Barque	565	LACRYMATOIRE.	
Song of the World-sick	566	Vickie D—	609
Genius, and no Moonshine	568	The Loan Reclaimed	611
Matt Muckstave	569	"Suffer Little Children to Come unto Me"	612
Thoughts	572	She Sleeps	613
Was it a Vision	574	A Little and True Ballad	615
A Fragment	576	Our Father's Flower	617
The World	581	Beautiful Spirit	617
My Brown-Browed Girl	583	A Little Flash of Light	618
Wishes and Wishers	584	The Wherefore	618
A Lay of Labour	585	A Death-Bed Dream	619
A Lament	587	Only a Flower	621
A Lay to the Great Un- known	590	Rap-Tap	622
		Where it Must Be	630



13



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